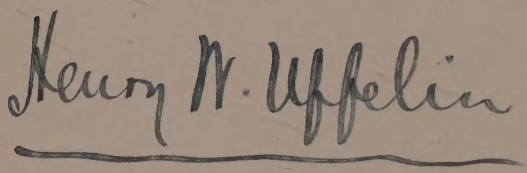
The Inspiration of the Bible

S. A. SMITH



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THE MODERN THEORY OF THE BIBLE

BY

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"They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."
LUKE 16, 29.

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FOREWORD

THE Bible is not in danger. A book that has survived the attacks of its enemies and the mistakes of its friends for thousands of years is immortal. But false views about the Bible, that tend to destroy our faith in it as the revealed word of God, are fraught with great danger to the individual, society, and the nation. This sort of error is like undermining the foundation of a building. It is our duty to combat it, expose its fallacy, and drive it away.

The tap-root of the modern theory of the Bible is Rationalism, or the principle that everything is to be understood in the light of human reason. This gave rise to the evolutionary conception of history, which excludes the idea of Providence. Knudson says: "In the early part of the eighteenth century the Italian jurist Vico (1668-1744) made the theory of man's gradual development out of a barbaric state basal in the science of history. But the principles he laid down did not come to be fully appreciated until almost a century later; so that it is only during the past hundred years that the idea of evolution has been employed in a strictly scientific way to the reconstruction of ancient history." The application

of this theory to the interpretation of the history of Israel abolished the old distinction between "sacred" and "profane" history, and put the history of the Jews on the same basis with the history of the Greeks and Romans. The Darwinian theory of evolution gave a scientific basis for this conception of history. According to the theory of Darwin, man is a developed ape. From a monkey he gradually grew to be a "man," passing in countless ages through the successive stages of "Paleolithic man," "Neolithic man," the "Cave man," the "Primitive man," until at last he emerged a civilised man. As such he invented the art of writing, and began to make a permanent record of events. Even after he became "civilised" in a measure, that is, began to wear clothes, and to notice things around him, and ask questions about them, he was for a long period of time in a state of childhood, believed in ghosts, wonder-tales, marvels, and "miracles;" so that the early records of all nations, the Jews included, consist of a mass of mythological stories, that have no historical value, except as illustrations of the crude and undeveloped life of the primitive people.

Now it turns out that the Darwinian theory of evolution is false. I threw it overboard ten years ago. Not that I ever accepted it, except in that provisional sense in which every intelligent man accepts what is put forward by such men as Darwin, as a possibly new truth. I hold myself ready to accept all new truth, whatever sacrifice it may demand; for

truth is the life of the soul. Darwin's theory of evolution held absolute command of the intellectual world for half a century, and created the greatest revolution in the history of human thought. All departments of philosophy, history, science, and religion were revised to harmonise with it. It was supreme. Fortunately for me, I was at the University of Virginia when Darwin's epoch-making book, *The Origin of Species,* was winning its way first in this country, and sitting at the feet of a Gamaliel of science, Dr. Francis H. Smith, then Professor of Natural Science in the University of Virginia. From Professor Smith I learned two things that have been of infinite value to me all my life: first, not to give up an old belief until I was sure it was false; and, second, to take all scientific theories on trial. Like Dr. Smith, I held on to my old belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and gave us an inspired account of the origin of the world; and took Darwin's theory on trial. So I was not in the leaky vessel, and did not have to swim ashore when it went down, or send out an "S. O. S." for emergency rescue from the waves of scientific unbelief.

Ten or twelve years ago there appeared a book from the press of T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, entitled, *No Struggle for Existence—No Natural Selection. A Critical Examination of the Fundamental Principle of the Darwinian Theory.* By George Paulin. The book as far as I know made very little noise in this country; indeed the President of one of

the leading Northern universities admitted to me that he had never heard of it, and intimated that the Darwinian theory was so firmly established that to question it was to prove one's incapacity to discuss scientific subjects. He said that "Herbert Spencer was passing, but Darwin was here to stay!" On the strength of what I had read in Paulin's book, I replied that Darwin was here to stay as a great collector of facts, but that the day was at hand when he would be regarded as an obsolete interpreter of facts. Ten years have hardly passed, and science has discarded the Darwinian theory, and confirmed Paulin's judgment of its utter baselessness. "It appeared to me," said Paulin, "that an elaborated theory whose fundamental and vivifying principle was a demonstrably false assumption must itself, when examined in detail, be found to be an extraordinary concatenation of weird concepts, of sins against logic and common sense, of criminal violations of Nature's known laws, and of audacious and indefensible assertions. My investigations proved it to be so, a rotten tenement tottering in its every joint—a ship tumbling helplessly on the brine, leaking at every plank."

I had been standing on the Rock of Ages watching the crazy craft tossing in the waves, and now saw the planks spread, and the ship that promised to carry us across the deep gulf between man and the lower animals go down in the fathomless depths. And with it went down the evolutionary conception

of history based upon it. There is a vast deal in the Old Testament that cannot be reconciled with this theory, such as the lofty monotheism and sublime ethical teachings of the Pentateuch. To harmonise the Old Testament with the evolutionary hypothesis, the Higher Critics invented the theory of the late origin of the Pentateuch. They arbitrarily take all that is inconsistent with their theory of man's evolution out of its natural order, and assign it to a late date. And it is all conjectural. They have no positive proof. In his tract, *The Menace of Darwinism,* Mr. Bryan stresses the point that Darwin, and indeed all who hold his views, made large use of the word "probably." The same criticism applies to the modern view of the Old Testament. Some chapters of a recent book that discusses the origin of the books of the Old Testament could hardly have been written without a liberal use of the words "probably," "perhaps," "it seems," "it is likely," and similar terms that indicate the uncertain nature of the statements made. Yet these statements are made with a dogmatic assurance as if they were unquestionably true; and on vague and purely conjectural grounds they lift Moses out of his seat of authority, strip him of all his medals, and leave him so naked that he needs some of the fig leaves from the mythical Eden to conceal his shame!

Fifty years ago, Christleib, then an evangelical preacher in Germany, sent out a note of warning that this destructive view of the Bible was being

taught in the German universities, and predicted that when it filtered down to the masses there would be trouble. We have seen what the trouble would be. Speaking broadly, the World War was the result of infidelity—the legitimate fruit of the Rationalism that dealt with the Bible simply as profane history. Rationalism killed the conscience of Germany and prepared the way for her "ruthless warfare," whose revolting atrocities shocked the civilised world. If we teach this Rationalistic theory of the Bible in our High Schools, and Colleges, and Universities, what do we do but travel the same intellectual road that led Germany to ruin? How will we avoid her fate?

The Higher Critics who hold this modern theory of the Bible lean back in their professorial chairs with the smug conceit that they have the scholarship of the age on their side. Whoever differs with them stands self-condemned as incompetent to judge in such matters. Technical scholarship is one thing and common sense is another. A man doesn't have to be able to read the Code of Hammurabi in order to see the illogical reasoning of a vast deal of the literary criticism of the Bible. A course in logic while they were studying Syriac would have been a good corrective of some of the errors of eminent scholars. According to their own admission, it is a question of probabilities as to who wrote Deuteronomy, except that it was not written by Moses. Their theory is that it is the "book" which was found in the rubbish of the Temple when it was being re-

paired during the reign of Josiah. The Higher Critics say that it was written by some unknown person, and hid in the rubbish of the Temple, and by this trick, they fooled the king into believing that it was the book of Moses that had been lost.

Admit what they claim that it was the custom in those early times to attribute documents to famous people who did not write them, is such an origin of Deuteronomy "probable," looking at the question from the standpoint of common sense? After all the vicissitudes of Judah's history; after the apostate kings that had reigned over her; after the successive deposits of heathenism that had over-laid the original Mosaic teachings; and especially in view of the scarcity of books in that time, it seems to me not unreasonable that the book of the Law should be practically lost, and far more probable than that it was a forgery by some unknown priest. Admit the character of Moses, as the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, give it to us, and the book of Deuteronomy might easily have come from his mighty mind! On a balance of probabilities, I think any one whose mind is not biased by the fictions of the Higher Criticism will give it to Moses. One thing is especially noticeable about the modern theory of the Bible, and that is the comparatively low value it places on the Old Testament. This is a natural result of the theory of its origin.

It is impossible to have the same regard for mythology that we have for inspired history. No intel-

ligent person claims that the books of the Bible are of equal value, or would give the same importance to Esther as to the Psalms, or say that the Old Testament is as necessary to our spiritual life as the New Testament; but those who hold the traditional view of the Bible believe that it is an organic whole, and that each book contributes a vital element of truth to the revelation it contains. The New Testament is the unfolding of the Old Testament; and it certainly vastly enlarges our conception of Christ to discover that he was anticipated in the earliest experience of the race, and his redemptive offices and work set forth in a wonderful symbolism whose ritual of worship was intended to educate the Jewish people, and prepare them for the coming Christ. When Jesus told the Jews who were criticising him to search the Scriptures, and that they testified of him, he meant the Old Testament, for there was none of the New Testament in existence then. Our Lord's statement invests these Old Testament Scriptures with the highest value and clothes them with a sacred interest. For my part, I never feel like jesting about Noah and the Ark, or Jonah and the whale, since Jesus made such a serious use of these Old Testament incidents. According to the modern theory of the Bible, the Old Testament is a scaffold, and when the New Testament came, we had no further use for the scaffold. According to the traditional theory of the Bible the Old Testament is a foundation on which the New Testament is built,

and when you shake the foundation, you shake the whole structure.

And this is just exactly what you do in the modern theory of the historic origin of the Old Testament as set forth by the Higher Critics. The very same canons of literary criticism applied to the New Testament make it a mass of unhistorical traditions. The Gospels become mythology, that is narratives that have a germ of truth around which there has accumulated a growth of fiction. The same reasoning that makes the Adam of Genesis a "symbol," makes the Jesus of Matthew, whom Paul called the "second Adam," also a "symbol." The logic of it all inevitably gives you a Unitarian Christ, a Christ who was only a man, like the great Zoroaster, and the greater Buddha; a greater man than either, perhaps, but still only a man, and not the Divine Christ of the New Testament, in whom dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Christianity that is to save this sin-cursed race is the Christianity that teaches the true divinity of Jesus. Unitarianism is a respectable cult, illogically teaching an ethical code whose highest sanction it denies; but what has it done, or is it doing, to save sinners! Its influence is a negligible factor in human history. The great river of salvation that has made glad the desolate places of the earth, and turned its deserts into spiritual Edens, flows out of the Deity of Jesus; and that doctrine rests on the historical veracity of the New Testament.

So the issue between the destructive and the conservative criticism of the Bible is one of life or death. Truth is the conformity of thought to reality. Believing the Bible to be the inspired word of God, I have honestly devoted my whole life, now past three score years and ten, to proclaiming it to be the truth. I cannot say like Paul, that I gave up everything to serve Christ as my divine Lord and Master; for I had little to give. But I can say for fifty years I have unselfishly renounced all this world had to offer for the joy of preaching Jesus; and now in my age, and in honourable, apostolic poverty, I am happy both in the retrospect and the prospect of my life. But if the modern theory of the Bible is true, I have built on sand, and my spiritual deposits are as worthless as the bag of gold at the end of the rainbow!

In one of our large cities recently, some irresponsible person carelessly remarked that a certain bank in the city was unsound. It was one of the strongest banks in the city, and numbered among its depositors thousands of hard-working men and women who had put their little earnings in that bank for safe-keeping. The rumor spread, gathering force as it went, until the depositors began to get uneasy; then they wanted their money, and there was a rush for the bank. The big doors were closed to the surging thousands in the street, and strong policemen beat back the mob. It was not until a well-known business man in the city, in whom they

all had confidence, climbed a telephone pole, and clinging to it, made the excited crowd a speech, assuring them there was not a word of truth in the rumour of the bank's insecurity, that the people became quiet and returned home. If the modern theory of the Bible is true, the sooner we get our faith-deposits out of the fraudulent concern we call Christianity the better.

But, thank God, the theory is not only not true; its falseness is so evident that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not be deceived by it.

In publishing these messages I am complying with the earnest desire of many who have heard them to see them in print. May the God who guided David's stone to Goliath's brain guide my pebble to its mark.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Modern Theory of the Bible .	21
II.	Genesis in the Light of Modern Science	69
III.	The Hebrew Prophets	109

I

THE MODERN THEORY OF THE BIBLE

I

THE MODERN THEORY OF THE BIBLE

HIGHER Criticism, a term of which we hear so much in the current discussions of the Bible, is the historical study of the books of the Bible as books. "President King," says Dr. Mains, himself a "higher critic," "has thus defined its scope: 'Positively, higher criticism may be defined as a careful historical and literary study of a book to determine its unity, age, authorship, literary form, and reliability. In the determination of these problems, account is taken of the historical references contained in the book, of the style of the book, of the opinions expressed in it, of the citations made in it, and of the testimony (or lack of testimony) to this book found in other books of acknowledged authority, where some reference might be expected. The higher criticism of the book is thus, in the main, a painstaking study of the book itself to get at the facts about it."

Certainly this "process is perfectly legitimate," and will always possess interest and value for Bible students. But it is a process which has led to widely divergent views, so that we have "destructive higher criticism," and "conservative higher criticism," ac-

cording as the conclusions impair or promote belief in the Bible as a divinely inspired book. In the common understanding of the term, higher criticism has come to mean the destructive criticism of the Bible; and when you speak of the higher critic, the non-professional person understands you to mean one who holds the radical theory. For my part, I see nothing "high" about it; and it has certainly given us some very "low" ideas about the Bible. I hold to the conservative higher criticism. I believe the method of the destructive higher critic is wrong, his data largely imaginary, and his conclusions arbitrary and false. The modern theory of the Bible is a skyscraper built on sand.

According to the traditional theory of the Bible, in which I believe, and which I maintain in these messages, the books of the Bible were written for the most part by the men whose names they bear; that these men were inspired in a supernatural sense to preserve a trustworthy record of the history of the Jewish people, and of the events leading up to that history from the beginning of the world; and that in that history we have an authentic revelation of the one true God and his plan of salvation for man. This does not mean that the sacred writers were automatons through whom, as through a machine like a victrola, God spake to man. Nor does it mean that the *ipsissima verba,* the very words themselves were dictated. The Bible is not inerrant in the sense that it contains no mistakes in chron-

ology and unimportant discrepancies in narrative. It is perfectly consistent with the conservative view of the Bible, and a sound historical method of study, to think that in the transmission of the original documents through all the vicissitudes of time, the revolutions and changes, the upheavals and destructions of human progress through the ages, there were interpolations and additions to the text. No sensible person supposes that Moses wrote the account of his own death and burial.

Nor is it inconsistent with this view of the Bible to believe that the twenty-seven chapters that form the latter part of the Prophecy of Isaiah, were not spoken by Isaiah, but by some unknown prophet of the Captivity, and were attached to the real Isaiah because they are the logical fulfilment of his messages, and have such close affinity with his thought. But this is a very different thing from saying that Moses did not write any, or almost nothing, of the books attributed to him; and that there is hardly anything in the book of Isaiah that really came from him, which is the teaching of the Destructive criticism.

Conservative criticism teaches that the inspiration of the Bible was "an actuating energy" of the Holy Ghost on the mind of the sacred writer that enabled him to understand and to declare spiritual truth undiscoverable by human reason; which gave him insight into the moral constitution and spiritual laws and meaning of the world, but left him free to speak

as a man to his fellow men; and he spoke under all the limitations of human nature. The Bible is as much a human as it is a divine book; but it is also as much a divine book as it is a human book. While it is perfectly right to study the Bible using the same methods that we use in studying the history of any other people, we must never forget that God was with the Jewish people as he was not with any other people. He chose them and set them apart from all other people, that he might train them, and through them reveal his truth to the human race. In this process of moral education, God manifested himself to the Hebrews as he did not to the Egyptians or the Chaldeans, the Greeks or the Romans, and they became the custodians of a divine revelation, the record of which we have in the Bible.

Some of the destructive higher critics seem unconscious of the logical inconsistencies of their theory. Take as an example Professor George Adam Smith, one of the most distinguished Biblical scholars of his age. In his book, "Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament," he "bases his proof of a divine revelation in the Old Testament," says Dr. Orr, on the fact that "in a physical environment very fertile in polytheism, Israel alone was enabled, not merely to rise above this to a stage of religion subordinate only to the Christianity of Christ, but to exhibit throughout her whole history a religious progress which Christ affirmed to be the gradual preparation for himself.

To this unique exception in the history of Semitic religion it is my firm belief," says Dr. Smith, "that only one cause can be assigned, and that is that in the religion of Israel, as recorded in the Old Testament, there is an authentic revelation of the one true God." In these words Dr. Smith definitely admits a supernatural element in the history of the Jews, which is a fundamental principle of Conservative criticism. But the attempt to interpret Old Testament history on naturalistic principles, which is the fundamental fallacy of Destructive criticism, flatly contradicts this fact. Dr. Smith's admission of a supernatural element in Hebrew history logically annihilates half of his critical conclusions about the books of the Old Testament; for these conclusions are based on the supposition that the history of the Jews is to be interpreted just as the history of any other people.

Furthermore, the Conservative theory teaches that the revelation contained in the Old Testament, as Dr. Smith admits, was a gradual preparation for Christ. It was related from the beginning to what St. Paul called a "hidden wisdom," a secret purpose, which could not be made known until the "fulness of the time;" it, therefore, had a unity and consistency with itself that the history of no other nation possesses, and that constitutes one of the most striking evidences of its truth. The Destructive critic says that we read modern theological meanings into the primitive incidents of Israel's history which

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they were never intended to convey. But how is it that you can read these modern meanings into the primitive incidents of Israel's history, and cannot read them into the primitive incidents of any other ancient people? How is it that the whole history of the moral progress of our race through conflict with evil is a practical commentary on the promise contained in Genesis that "the seed" of the woman should "bruise" the serpent's head, while it should "bruise his heel?" Can you see anything else in that brief, yet comprehensive statement, than a wonderful forecast of moral struggle issuing finally in the triumph of the truth? Is it not remarkable that a tale told to explain to children why snakes crawl should be capable of translation into the terms of all subsequent history, and proves to be an epitome of the record of the race!

The modern theory of the Bible empties the Old Testament of all that is supernatural and reduces it to the level of the tales of Homer and the stories of Herodotus. But according to the Conservative criticism we do not read into the ancient history of the Jews meanings they were not intended to convey. Jesus told the Jews that Moses wrote of him, and that away back of Moses, Abraham understood the spiritual meaning of history, and foresaw his "day." St. Peter declared the true philosophy of history, when he said that "the prophets enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come; searching what, or what manner

of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." That shows what has always been, and always will be, the main current of human history. No one can interpret the history of the world who does not understand that truth. According to that interpretation, the whole system of Christian truth is implicit in the earliest facts connected with the origin of man, and is gradually unfolded in the history of the Jews.

According to the "faith of our fathers," Jesus Christ is the subject of the Bible from beginning to end. Every patriarch in every niche in God's Westminster Abbey; every prophet whose shining face looks forth from every chiseled bust; every saint whose glowing countenance beams from the gorgeous windows; every poet, mantled in light, whose harp vibrates with celestial music, is pointing with a star-tipped rod to the transfigured Christ! Every ray of light that trembles through the solemn air, and quivers around monumental urn, and streams along the crystal aisles, and flames from sacramental shrines, and flashes from the sapphire dome of this great temple of truth, is focussed upon Christ, the Redeemer of the world! Every anthem extols him as King of kings and Lord of lords; and the universal chorus, whose trembling thunders of adoring worship reverberate among the lofty arches of sacred history stretching along the whole course of time,

proclaim him Lord of all! The glory of Christ illuminates this mighty minister of God from the seraph-guarded gate of the Eden that was lost to the pearly portal of the Paradise regained through his redeeming love. The Bible was given to reveal Christ, in whom is the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and this unique purpose binds its different parts into a vital unity, and lifts this book out of the category of human literature and attests its divinity.

. . . . . .

It is highly important to remember that the truth of the Bible does not depend on who wrote it, or when or where it was written. The supreme evidence that it is the word of God is its adaptation to the spiritual needs of man. As the eye corresponds to the light; as the lung corresponds to the air; as the stomach corresponds to the food that nourishes the body; so the Bible corresponds to man's moral nature and nourishes his soul. In the fine language of Coleridge, the Bible "finds" us. It is the key that opens the lock of conscience, and that is what we want a key for. Whether the key was made in Switzerland or in Connecticut, of steel or of brass, or was brought to us by an Englishman or an Indian, may be of interest; but it is not essential. The Bible is the key that unlocks the treasures of the knowledge of God; gives us the only rational explanation of life; and while it finds us, enables us to find God and to get right with him. To well informed people, therefore, who are capable of dis-

criminating in such matters, it is unessential whether Deuteronomy was written by Moses 1500 years before Christ, or by some unknown priest 300 years before Christ. But few people are so discriminating. Most people identify the message with its history, which is perfectly natural, since Christianity is a historical religion. To tell the average man, unversed in the subtilties of literary and historical criticism, that the great facts, or what he has always believed to be the great facts related in Genesis are fables invented to satisfy the naïve curiosity of children, is to destroy his faith in Genesis as a revelation of God. One can understand how the great and solemn fact of the origin of sin in the world is veiled in allegory—if allegory it be—of the "serpent" that tempted Eve; but to say that it is a story told by some pre-historic parent to explain to his children "why snakes crawl" is to empty the narrative of all meaning, rob it of all dignity, and destroy its authority over the conscience. That would be a tragedy in the life of any man, even if the theory were undoubtedly true; for nothing can compare in sadness with the loss of religious belief. But the modern theory of the late origin and mythological character of much of the Old Testament is undoubtedly false.

As a fair sample of the modern theory of the Bible I quote the following from *The Old Testament in the Life of To-day,* a scholarly work by Rev. J. A. Rice, D.D., now Professor of Old Testament Literature in the Southern Methodist Uni-

versity, at Dallas, Texas. Speaking of the book of Genesis, he says: "There can be no doubt that the First Chapter of Genesis undertakes to answer with naïve simplicity questions primitive peoples had to face—how the universe, including man and animals, came into existence; why women are subject to men; why they bear children in pain; why snakes crawl; how sin came into the world; how people came to wear clothes; why people suffer and die; why thorns and thistles make farming so difficult—indeed, why hard work is at all; what was the origin of races and languages, etc., etc. The answers given to these, and many like questions, in Genesis, conflict directly with our modern scientific conceptions. We have now abandoned the effort to harmonise the two, for to do so is to juggle with plain facts." [1]

According to that theory, the book of Genesis is a compilation of mythological tales, like the legends and fables of the pre-historic ages of Greece and Rome. They have no historical value or theological meaning. They are folk-lore, the "Br'er Rabbit" tales told around the camp-fires of the cave men, venerable apes, still rubbing the stumps of their caudal appendages against the stones. They told these tales with naïve simplicity to satisfy the curiosity of the little intellectual and developing monkeys around them. At some late period subsequent to the return of the Jews from the captivity in Babylon, these tales were collected and promulgated under the fic-

[1] *The Old Testament in the Life of To-day*, p. 135.

titious authority of a mythical hero named Moses. From being the inspired lawgiver and divinely guided statesman of our old, but now obsolete Bible, a man "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in words and deeds," according to the modern theory of the Bible Moses shrinks into a fabulous character, a sort of Hebrew Hercules; and the wonders he is said to have wrought to compel Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go out of Egypt, were not miracles, but tricks of magic, sleight-of-hand performances, feats of thaumaturgic skill, similar to the marvels artful jugglers perform to-day. Moses simply beat the magicians in the game, and Dr. Rice says he was a "master magician, able to command with his magic wand the forces of nature like some mystic giant in fairy land."[1] On this theory all the wonders of Israel's ancient history are on a par with the legend of the Argonauts.

There is nothing new in this theory. It is an American edition of German Rationalism. There is a striking parallel between the conclusions of the Higher Criticism of the Iliad and the Bible. Homer's Iliad was for a long time the Bible of the Greeks, not in the sense in which the Holy Scriptures are our Bible, i.e., a book containing a revelation of the true God; but as a record of the heroic deeds of their ancestors, the story of their gods and goddesses, and the fount of inspiration to the Hellenic race. Even after the rise of philosophy and

[1] *The Old Testament in the Life of To-day*, p. 139.

history, when the great thinkers of Greece had cast ridicule on the teachings of the Iliad, it remained the most venerable literary monument of their antiquity and commanded the universal admiration of the world. For centuries the Iliad and the Odyssey were regarded as substantially the work of a great genius named Homer, modified, perhaps, in some unimportant respects by the interpolations and additions natural in the transmission of written documents through long ages; but in the main the work of Homer.

But the destructive higher criticism threw the Iliad into a deep eclipse for a time. In 1795 a German scholar, named Wolf, brought out a new version of the Iliad. He prefaced his book with an introduction in which he discussed the origin and history of the famous poem, and startled the literary world with his destructive conclusions. According to Wolf, the Iliad was not the work of one man, but of a multitude of poets, and its composition stretched over centuries of time. If such a man as Homer ever existed, which was doubtful, he was only one of many who contributed to the great national epic of the Greeks. These separate poems were collected and put into shape as one book by Pisistratus, the ruler of Athens, in the fifth century before Christ. Wolf based these conclusions chiefly on two alleged facts, the absence of the art of writing among the Greeks in Homer's time, and internal differences of style. According to Wolf, the Greeks of Hom-

er's age were without writing, and it would be impossible to compose such a long poem without reducing it to writing; and he claimed that there were differences in style, contradictions, anachronisms, and numerous literary variations in the poem that destroyed the theory of its unity. Such a radical attack on one of the most venerated literary documents of mankind naturally produced a profound sensation in the intellectual world. But it completely failed, and old Homer shines to-day with all of his original brightness. Dr. Smith, in his history of Greece, which reflects the larger work of Grote, says that the best scholarship has rejected the theory of Wolf and restored the Iliad to its former place.

"We can only state," says Dr. Smith, "that the best modern scholars, with very few exceptions, have come to a conclusion directly contrary to Wolf's daring theory. Some of the ablest critics in modern times have directed their attention to the subject, and while they have not denied the existence of interpolations, more or less extensive, in both poems, (the Iliad and the Odyssey) the general result has been to establish their poetical unity, and to vindicate their claim to be the greatest models of the epic art."[1] These words are as true of the Bible as they are of the Iliad.

By precisely analogous reasoning, the destructive higher criticism has torn the Bible to pieces, made

[1] Smith's *History of Greece,* p. 46.

Moses a myth, Genesis mythology and Isaiah a patch-work of traditions. It is as false in application to the Bible as it was to the Iliad; but to the extent that it is accepted, its consequences to Christian faith will be disastrous. It makes "the faith of our fathers;" the faith founded by Jesus and baptised with Pentecostal flame; the faith that resisted the fires of persecution and defied imperial Rome to quench it; the faith that created Christendom, built the great cathedrals, wrote the In Memoriam, cleared the paths of progress and climbed the heights of hope; the faith that has for ages held "the promise and the potency" of a redeemed humanity on earth, but the baseless fabric of a dream! One has only to think it through to its logical end to land in an abyss of nothingness. The denial of the supernatural is implicit in the whole modern theory of the Bible. It is an attempt to explain revealed religion on naturalistic principles.

By a process of intellectual atavism, the destructive higher critics have reverted to the Deism of a hundred years ago. As a movement of thought, Deism began with an attempt to get rid of the "irrational" element in revealed religion, and ended by getting rid of revealed religion! It was only one of the waves of infidelity that have dashed against the impregnable rock of the inspired Bible, and recoiled into the deep. The destructive higher criticism of the Old Testament will go the same way.

One of the most scholarly works on the Bible is

the *Popular and Critical Biblical Encyclopedia.* This great work was edited by the eminent prelate, the Rt. Rev. Samuel Fallows, D.D., LLD., assisted by more than a hundred of the foremost scholars of this country. Speaking of this modern theory of the Bible, page 470, it says: "It has gained notoriety chiefly from the startling and extravagant nature of its results, and the confidence with which it has been put forward; the confidence being in inverse proportion to the solidity of the foundations upon which these statements rest. . . . When we ask for the evidence upon which the unanimous belief of centuries is reversed, and the authenticity and trustworthiness of the Old Testament Scriptures are alike denied, we find that it consists almost entirely of a philological analysis made by European and American scholars. Passages are torn from their context and assigned to authors who are supposed to have lived centuries after the events which they record took place, if indeed they ever took place at all. And this is done on the strength of a few words, or idioms, which the philologist assumes to indicate a particular authority or a particular date. The conclusions which are thus obtained are often supported only by microscopic contradictions detected in the text, many of which are due to the arbitrary interpretation of the critic, or by his dogmatic assertion that the statements contained in it are incredible."

When you consider the list of scholars who un-

derwrite that statement, you will think twice before you send your mother's Bible to a museum of literary relics of antiquity. It is characteristic of the destructive higher critical school that they assume that they have modern learning on their side, and they smile with a sort of haughty superiority and intellectual contempt on all who do not accept their speculations as either ignorant, or imprisoned in a dungeon of prejudice. Read that list of scholars and you can return the smile and puncture the conceit. You are in splendid intellectual company when you believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch and that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, was a prophet in Israel!

I repudiate the higher critical theory which teaches that Genesis is mythology and the prophets, "from Moses to Samuel little more than dervishes," for the following reasons:

First: The evidence on which this theory rests is vague, uncertain, arbitrary, and for the most part pure conjecture.

It is based mainly on two assumptions: first, the late origin of writing, and second, that internal differences of style indicate different authors. Let us examine these main pillars of the system, and we will find them made of paste-board painted to look like marble! First, the assumption of the late origin of writing is amply refuted by archeology. The higher critics have been routed at every point on this

field. They denied that there was any written history in Greece before the time of Solon, and declared that the tale of Troy was fiction; "but these men have been forced from the field by the excavations of Dr. Schliemann and others, who have verified Greek tradition by clothing the Achæan princes and the kings of Mycenæ with flesh and blood. The remains of Troy have been found, although it had long been declared to have existed only in cloudland." We now know that when Moses wrote Genesis, writing had been in use, perhaps, for a thousand years. For a long time the higher critics stoutly denied the existence of such a person as Chedalaomer, and declared that the whole story of Abraham's bold adventure and triumph, as related in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, was fiction; but the whole narrative has been fully vindicated by Assyrian tablets in the British Museum and in the Museum of Constantinople, and the "etymological fictions" of the higher critics turn out to have been historic realities! The *Popular and Critical Biblical Encyclopedia* referred to above, says "Archeology has confirmed our confidence in the historical accuracy of the Old Testament in a two-fold manner: first, by showing the high literary culture of the age to which the books belong; and second, by recent and reliable archeological discoveries which have shown that the doubts which had been cast upon the antiquity and credibility of the Old Testament narratives are wholly unwarranted." All the

facts of archeology are against the modern theory of the Bible. Every stroke of the archeologist's pick in the ancient ruins of the east smashes the theory like an egg-shell!

The second assumption, that internal differences of style indicate different authors, is arbitrary, unwarranted by facts, and contradicts ordinary common sense by its fantastic speculation. Many of the alleged differences of style are discoverable only by a philological microscope, and when discovered do not prove the critic's point. He follows a wrong method and the basis of his reasoning is false. His whole argument about "J" and "E," and "JE" and "JED," is arbitrary and fanciful. It has no foundation in a correct philology and was invented to support a purely fictitious theory. Its main strength is the audacity of its assertion. It is a pure invention, a technique of criticism as thin as a spider's web. The wonder is that any man would be deceived by it. Its general application would play havoc with the literature of the world. We have seen what it did for Homer's Iliad until a sounder scholarship rescued the "Grand Old Bard" from the clutches of literary Bolshevism! God pity the man who will give his Bible up for such pretended reasons. He is like a "wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed."

By the same critical process you can dissect Tennyson's poems, and prove that one man wrote "Maud," another "The Northern Farmer," another

"In Memoriam," and still another the drama of "Queen Mary." The dialectical differences, the "atmosphere," the forms and idioms, and the whole structure of thought, are just as marked. Yet we know that Tennyson wrote them all. A thousand years from now he may become a "myth" to the higher critics of that time, and if they are like the higher critics of to-day, they will affirm that these differences of style in the poetry prove a variety of authors, who, being unknown, the poems will all be grouped under the name of Tennyson! They will be as near right as the higher critics are to-day about Genesis.

It is no proof that different authors wrote Genesis, and other books of the Bible, because in some places God is called "Elohim," and in others "Jehovah." These profound names signify different aspects of the Supreme Being, and different relations which God sustains to man; and the same writer might use them, and we believe did use them, in writing the first five books of the Bible. Moses was a very learned man, and doubtless made use of many sources of religious knowledge ancient even in his day; but he wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and gave us a broad and reliable sketch of the historic background of redemption, which was his fundamental purpose. No intelligent person denies that these differences of style exist, or that Moses used older documents and traditions, or that his own writings have undergone subsequent revi-

sion; but we assert that these facts do not justify the conclusion of the higher criticism that Genesis is mythology, and the Pentateuch a literary crazy quilt put together by unknown writers of a late period. We cannot afford to "scrap" the Bible, like an obsolete battleship, on the strength of such literary guessing. I repeat, that the evidence on which this modern theory of the Bible rests is vague, uncertain, arbitrary, and for the most part pure conjecture.

Second: *The modern theory of the Bible contradicts the ancient and uniform tradition of the Jews as to the origin of their sacred books.*

According to the higher criticism the Old Testament was put into practically its present form in 444 B. C., about the time that Pisistratus and Solon were editing into order the poems of Homer. That is to say, more than 2300 years ago the learned scholars of that time attributed the books of the Old Testament to the authors whose names they bear. But certain learned men of to-day have discovered that those old scholars were mistaken. These modern scholars have found out by literary inspection that Moses did not write the books ascribed to him, and that Genesis is a collection of mythological tales, told to explain why snakes crawl, and so on. Now which were more likely to know who wrote these books, the scholarly man who lived 2300 years nearer the time when they were written, or the men

who lived 2300 years farther away from that time? Is it wise, is it reasonable, to set aside a tradition so ancient and so uniform, and so consistent with the historical record of Israel and the special mission of the Jewish race, for the flimsy speculations of this modern theory? For my part I believe those ancient scholars knew more about it than these wise men of Chicago. At any rate, I shall not exchange the luminous and vital tradition for the vague and fantastic theory of the destructive higher criticism until it can produce better evidence of its truth than it has presented yet. I have profound respect for real Biblical scholarship, and have derived vast advantage from the historical study of the Bible in the light of modern discoveries; but a tradition hallowed by centuries of undisputed belief, and that has in itself all the "potency and promise" of a constructive faith in God, and in the Bible as an authentic revelation of his truth, cannot be set aside by a theory which is at best only a guess. I do not mean that a thing is true simply because it is old, for there are some hoary errors in the records of the world; but I do mean that age creates a reasonable presumption that a thing which is supported by abundant collateral proof is worthy of confidence. And the conservative theory of the Bible has commanded the belief and shaped the destiny of the race from a remote antiquity. The modern theory is an upstart of yesterday compared with it, and like all upstarts, it is self-conceited and insolent.

With patriotic pride a man boasted to a Jew that his forefathers came over the flood in the *Mayflower*. The son of Abraham quietly replied that his forefathers came over the flood in the ark!

Third: The modern theory of the unhistorical character of the Old Testament contradicts the testimony of the New Testament.

The Sadducees, who were the sceptics in the time of Christ; the Pharisees, who were the orthodox; Jesus himself, and all his disciples, all quoted from the Old Testament as historical according to the tradition. Of course, this counts for nothing with the higher critics, for the New Testament is as unhistorical for them as the Old Testament. They leave not Moses real nor Christ divine. They admit that the Jews in the time of Christ believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch; but they say they were not competent authorities in the field of literary criticism! How did they find that out? Where is their authority for that? It is an assertion without proof, and all the facts point the other way. The Jews were very careful about their sacred writings. The doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures grew out of their scrupulous regard for the very words of holy writ. They would not let a letter, or a dot, be altered. And there were learned men in that day. Paul reminds us that "these things were not done in a corner." Christ numbered scholarly men among his disciples. Stephen was a man

of learning. He met the gifted young Saul, who was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and in his discussion with him in the Synagogue, refuted his arguments, cracked the foundations of his hereditary faith, unsettled his life, and lodged in his conscience the convictions that were goads against which he kicked in vain till Jesus met him on the road to Damascus! Apollos was a learned man, came from Alexandria, a city famed throughout the world for its scholars. Luke was a man of large intelligence and has left us in the Acts of the Apostles a masterpiece of historic writing. He tells us that he took special pains to investigate and verify the sources of his statements. Both Matthew and Luke give us genealogical tables based on the historical veracity of the Old Testament; and Luke runs his genealogical table right straight through Genesis back to Adam. There is nothing more audacious, or contradictory of common sense, in the higher criticism than its assumption that the writers of the New Testament were incompetent judges of the integrity and trustworthiness of their sacred books. You will be safe if you take the Bible as Jesus did, and Jesus taught that Moses wrote the books ascribed to him in the Old Testament.

Fourth: The theory of the mythological character of Genesis excludes the idea of inspiration.

The only interest that can attach to it on that theory is for the student of archeological lore. It

is merely the literary driftwood of a distant past, and has no message for the common man, no revelation for the hungry heart. Now it is evident that our Lord, and all the writers of the New Testament, regarded the books of the Old Testament, not only as valid history, but as written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Peter expressed their belief when he said that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is simply impossible to harmonise that fact with the conception of Genesis as a collection of tales told to explain "why snakes crawl" and "how people came to wear clothes!" That theory of the origin of the Old Testament is Rationalism pure and simple; and yet that is what is now being taught in our universities! It is dangerous error, and it contradicts Jesus and all his disciples; for they taught that the Old Testament was written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to teach man, not why snakes crawl and people wear clothes, but the way of salvation! Referring to this "primitive view of nature and history," which an eminent higher critic says "Christianity must incorporate on pain of extinction," Dr. Orr very truly says: "It might be truer to say that the Christianity which incorporates this 'modern view' is not threatened with extinction, but is already extinguished."

Fifth: The theory of the mythological and unhistorical character of much of the Old Testament

raises a reasonable suspicion of the credibility of any of it.

According to the conservative theory the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is a divinely inspired book, and contains a system of truth which is perfectly consistent with itself. It is like an arch in which every part supports the whole, and no part can be removed without weakening the whole. And the books of the Bible are like blocks of solid marble built into a structure of enduring strength. Like that kind of stone which when exposed to the weather grows harder, exposure to the influences of time only renders these massive stones in God's temple of truth firmer and more enduring. But according to the modern theory of the Bible it is an arch constructed of imperfect material, here and there a bit of granite, but for the most part a loose conglomerate which disintegrates under the influence of time. The shrewd old Jews of Ezra's day gave it a veneer that made it look like solid stone, and they deceived the world for ages; but modern scholarship has detected the fraud and exposed the forgery! What confidence can be placed in a volume with an origin and history like that? What claim can such a book have to speak to the human conscience with authority? If Genesis is mythology and Deuteronomy a forgery, what assurance have we that the gospel of Matthew is not fiction and the Epistle to the Romans the rhapsody of some old anchorite! No! The Bible is a chain of gold, each

book is a link forged by the Holy Spirit. The first link fastened to the throne of God, "it dropped in order, symmetry, and light down through chaos and darkness, with the eye of God flashing down its entire length, kindling every link into beauty and glory!" [1] It is no stronger than its weakest link, but its weakest link is as strong as the truth of God. By that chain the lost world is anchored to the Rock of Ages. Satan, in the armour of the higher criticism, seeks to break that chain; but "the word of the Lord endureth forever."

All systems of knowledge are based on metaphysics, and the underlying thought foundations of the destructive higher criticism is a conception of God that resolves him into an interrogation point. The modern theory of the Bible is a part of a wider system of negation that doubts, if it does not deny, the reality of all religion. Its true motto is Pilate's question to Jesus, "What is truth?" According to this theory all things are in a state of instability and flux, and always will be. Nothing is ever finished. There are no fundamentals. The universe itself is but a passing phenomenon, a vanishing stage of being in an ever on-going stream of evolution, an everlasting "becoming." One of the founders and ablest expounders of this system, says: "The conception of the Cosmos, instead of a personal God, as the finality to which we are led by

[1] Munsey, *Lectures*, p. 423.

perception and thought, or the ultimate fact beyond which we cannot proceed, assumes the more definite shape of matter infinitely agitated, which, by differentiation and integration, develops itself to ever higher forms and functions, and describes an everlasting circle by evolution, dissolution, and then fresh evolution. . . . If this be considered pure, unmitigated materialism, I will not dispute it." [1]

Christianity, according to this theory, is only one of our "little systems" that "have their day and cease to be." They are not even "broken lights" of God; for God himself is a subjective conception, projected from our inner self and changing like all else. A misty "Elohim" served for the apes who were beginning to walk on two feet when company came. After the evolution of ages, the antiquated Elohim gave place to "Yahweh," and Yahweh in turn to the conception of Jesus of God as our "Father." Now we have out-grown that, and one of the God makers of this scheme of thought has given us a new deity in *God, the Invisible King,* by H. G. Wells. He is as ugly, as grotesque, and as absurd to common sense, as the big statue of Buddha; but it is the best he can do, and is a fair sample of the modern deity-maker's art. For my part, I would rather have a silver image of Diana; for I could invest the beautiful idol with imaginary attributes, and enjoy the delusion. But Mr. Wells' *Invisible King* is as repulsive to my esthetic sensibilities as to my eth-

[1] Strauss, *Old Faith and New,* vol. 2, p. 35.

ical convictions. There is no more pathetic character in the world to-day than H. G. Wells. His books are read by millions. He is evidently in desperate earnest to find the truth. He catches bright glimpses of it now and then, as when he says that Christianity is the only hope of the race; but his mind is unbalanced, lacks logical training, has more sail of fancy than ballast of reason. He is like a mariner at sea without chart or compass, anxious to steer the ship to the harbour, but all his bearings unknown, and drifting with the wind and tide! He reminds one of Laocoon, struggling with the serpents on the seashore. He is a fair sample of the intellectual out-put of the higher criticism:— I mean of that system of thought which, in the name of progress, rejects the venerable "faith once delivered to the saints," and reverting to the uncertain premises of heathen philosophy, attempts to solve "The Riddle of the Universe" by the light of human reason alone. Mr. Wells is utterly incompetent to write "History." He does not understand the alphabet of its spiritual interpretation—does not know where we are or where we are going: the origin and destiny of the race are alike an unsolved riddle to him. And no wonder, for the Bible to him is no more than the history of Greece or Rome; Genesis a collection of tales told to explain "why snakes crawl," and weeds grow!

Now over against this rickety structure of the destructive higher criticism, with its denial of the

historic truth of the Bible, its barren negations, its illogical speculations, its audacious dogmatism, and its poisonous gases of scepticism escaping from every chamber, stands "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture;" the age-hallowed and profound conception of the Bible as the inspired literature of a chosen people, in which we have an authentic revelation of the living and true God, his purpose in creation, and his plan for the human race on this planet. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ is a finality. He is the "Alpha and Omega," the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come." In him dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and we "are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." You can never get a Christ like that from the modern theory of the Bible!

At one point the modern philosophy of "Pragmatism" coincides with the teaching of Jesus: "By their fruits ye shall know them." We have a right, therefore, both by the authority of our Lord and the canon of their own philosophy, to ask what kind of fruit we may expect from this modern view of the Bible. And here we are confronted by a colossal demonstration of it in modern Germany. This modern view of the Bible was born in Germany and has borne its appropriate fruit there. What that fruit is all intelligent people know. It destroyed faith in the Bible, and made a nation of infidels.

It destroyed the national conscience, and created a ruthless national spirit. It substituted the Darwinian principle of brute force for the Christian principle of love, and reverted to the law of the jungle. To use Gladstone's fine expression, Germany became "the negation of God created into a system of government," Her "kultur" became a creed of blood, and all the forces of civilisation were subsidised as agencies of destruction.

In classic legends we read of a huge serpent that made his den in a cave. Issuing forth from the cave, the monster terrified the surrounding country. Cadmus slew the serpent, and as he stood looking at his huge body, he heard a voice bidding him bury the serpent's teeth in the ground. He obeyed the command. Soon the sod began to tremble, then points of spears appeared as thick as grass blades. Then the helmets and heads of soldiers arose, and soon there was an army of fierce warriors around him in dread array! Germany sowed the Dragon's teeth of Rationalism that destroyed faith in the Bible as a supernatural revelation, and they sprang up in savage armies that shook the civilisation of the world. To the extent which this theory gains foothold here in America, it will produce the same result. Yet the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, authorises it to be taught in her universities!

One of the most conspicuous fruits of the modern theory of the Bible, growing on its lowest limb and on its topmost bough, is incertitude of belief.

Where it does not destroy faith, it unsettles it, renders it feeble and hesitating, and fosters the doubt that results in spiritual paralysis. The changed attitude of the present age to religious truth is chiefly due to this theory of the Bible. In his *Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 91, William James says: "We have now whole congregations whose preachers, far from magnifying our consciousness of sin, seem rather devoted to making little of it. They ignore, or deny, eternal punishment, and insist on the dignity rather than the depravity of man. They look at the continual preoccupation of the old-fashioned Christian with the salvation of his soul as something sickly and reprehensible rather than admirable; and a sanguine and 'muscular' attitude, which to our fore-fathers would have seemed purely heathen, has become in their eyes an ideal element of Christian character. . . . But in that 'theory of evolution' which, gathering momentum for a century, has within the past twenty-five years swept so rapidly over Europe and America, we see the ground laid for a new sort of religion of nature, which has entirely displaced Christianity from the thought of a large part of our generation."

William James calls this "advance of liberalism" a healthy sign. That is, a movement "which has entirely displaced Christianity from the thought of a large part of our generation" is a healthy sign! That may suit the latitude of Boston, but it ought to be rank heresy in all evangelical circles. But

James states a solemn truth. It is evident in the intellectual attitude of scholarly men to-day toward the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. I venture to affirm that there is not a prominent man to-day, who holds the modern view of the Bible, who believes positively and definitely in the personality of God, the reality of sin, the necessity of atonement, the divinity of Jesus, the certainty of future punishment, and the immortality of the soul. All of these great truths are unmistakably taught in the Bible, but "the advance of liberalism" has unsettled belief in them. Dr. Van Dyke says: "The influence of the great mass of popular literature in which religion is practically ignored, tends to foster the impression that it is a subject in regard to which certainty is neither necessary nor attainable. The existence of God, the reality of the soul, the prospect of immortality,—these appear like insoluble problems to many of the children of this age. They are troubled and depressed and impoverished by the want of faith, but they accept indecision as the only rational attitude, and try to do the best they can without believing in 'the truths that never can be proved.'" This is the logical result of the modern theory of the Bible.

Another fruit of this loss of faith in the Bible as the authoritative word of God is the prevalence of lawlessness. The fear of God, and not the fear of the law, is the real foundation of society. Though the Roman statesmen had no faith in the Gods they

worshipped, yet, with profound wisdom, they realised that religion was the only force that can control the wayward passions of men, and they promoted it as a police measure. Even Voltaire realised that if there were no God it would be necessary to create one. The modern view of the Bible has to a large extent destroyed its authority over the conscience of men, and society is reaping its legitimate fruit in contempt of law. It is said that 65,000 girls are kidnapped every year in the United States, and that 36,000 are annually bought and sold in New York city for infamous purposes. Divorce has become a national menace and marriage the jest of the vaudeville stage and the society journal. Murder, robbery, and dishonesty of all kinds, make our daily papers almost police gazettes. Millions admire a pugilistic prize fight that gives the lie to all of our boasted idealism, and exalts brute force as the popular ideal. Meantime, the family altar has fallen down, and the sermon become a tame essay on ethics, and experimental religion an eccentricity, and the holy Sabbath a day of frivolity and dissipated pleasure.

In his book, *The Science of Power,* which should be read by all intelligent people, Mr. Benjamin Kidd attributes the terrific conflict with Germany to an "atavistic reversion" to the pagan ideal of civilisation, and traces it to Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species.* The doctrine of Evolution as set forth in Darwin's book gave a scientific basis for Prussian

militarism. Adopted and popularised in Germany by Haeckel, Nietzsche, Treitsche, and the "Intellectuals," it became the soul of German "Kultur," and was incorporated in the organic military law by the General Staff in their official instructions, entitled *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*. This doctrine of evolution that inspired the "Kultur" of Germany also produced this modern theory of the Bible. Dr. Lyman Abbott said: "Evolution has revolutionised our conception of the origin of sin, of the nature of the Bible, and of the authority of the Church." He was right in attributing this modern theory of the Bible to the doctrine of evolution.

Now the Darwinian theory of evolution, which wrought such immeasurable havoc in the world, is no longer a scientific doctrine. Like an obsolete battleship, it has gone the way of many another scientific hypothesis. One eminent scientist of to-day says that "the whole enormous intellectual labour of Darwin amounted to nothing." That is too sweeping an assertion. Darwin made permanent contributions to human knowledge, and cannot be held responsible for the vast abuse of his theory; but his honest effort to interpret nature is now known to have been a mistake, and as it goes down, all the theories based upon it go down with it; and this modern theory of the Bible is one of them.

An able writer in the Memphis *Commercial-Appeal*, a paper which has nobly defended the conservative view of the Bible, recently said editorially:

"Darwin's speculations concerning the origin of man, so augustly sponsored in both the educational and religious realms, have played havoc with the doctrinal integrity of organised Christianity. The astonishing sight is beheld of religious leaders adopting his hypothesis with a child-like faith which they in turn refuse to the supernatural phases of the Sacred Record. From a contemporary we learn that no French or English scientist of eminence believes in Darwin's theory. We capitally doubt the correctness of this assertion. But an official of the British Museum is quoted as saying: 'In all this great museum there is not a particle of evidence of the transmutation of species. Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation and wholly unsupported by facts.'

"A report of the Smithsonian Institution affirms: 'Evolution was expunged from the pages of science so completely that it seems it were forever buried beyond the hope of resurrection.' Both the London and the Washington institutions are under the direction of scientists, and some weight must, therefore, be attached to utterances from such sources. But it has not been many months since a leading southern churchman is reported to have defiantly told a public assembly that 'one is a fool who does not believe in evolution.' And it is a significant fact that this gentleman is under no slightest delusion concerning the imperial sweep of his own intellectual powers. Godlike, he would doubtless call them." If the

"gentleman" whose dogmatic assertion elicited the sarcasm of the editor had in mind the evolution of Darwin, he deserved the rebuke; for Darwinian evolution is an exploded theory.

These are some of the fruits borne by this modern theory of the Bible. They are limited to a more or less academic circle as yet, but this theory is gradually insinuating its errors into all our sources of religious culture. It is high time to call a halt. We cannot ignore this view of the Bible. We must face it and fight it from the field. When Lowell said, "Time makes ancient truth uncouth," he meant the garb of truth. Truth, like God, is unchangeable. This modern theory of the Bible is not truth, it is error; yet it is entrenched in our universities—taught at Yale and Chicago, and Dallas. That distinguished German was not wrong who said that if they had postponed the war ten years they would have had America sufficiently educated to have put her on the Teutonic side of the struggle! That was the object of their educational propaganda, and it has not been given up. German "Kultur" has an ally in every professor who teaches this view of the Bible in an American college. Yet Bishops endorse it; lecturers promulgate it on summer assembly platforms; and preachers spout it from the pulpit. It smacks of learning, and harmonises with the supercilious and flippant disdain of the past which is a marked characteristic of this age.

What attitude shall we take to this modern theory of the Bible? First, we must take the attitude of unwavering fidelity to the ancient faith. We must not be afraid to stand alone in its defence. We may sometimes feel like we are where Elijah thought he was when a certain woman sent him a message. But we must not make his mistake and run away. At the battle of Spottsylvania a handful of brave boys saved the day, and turned defeat into victory for Lee by sticking to their gun. The whole line wavered before the repeated onset of the dauntless men in blue; but they kept ramming in their charges and pulling the lanyard until the enemy gave way. For a few moments one lad held the line! With his head down, and his eyes shut, he pulled the cord, and that shot broke the morale of the foe, and they recoiled in defeat. God can put armies to flight if he can find one man on whom he can depend. We recite the creed to-day because one man stood immovably firm for the orthodox faith against the world. A greater peril threatens the church now than when Athanasius was the solitary champion of her truth; for it is not an interpretation of doctrine that is at stake now, but the veracity of the documents on which her faith is founded. It is a "shaking" time, and many things are going to pieces; but we have received "a kingdom that cannot be moved!" The faith of our fathers is not dead and will not die. In spite of infidel universities it is living still in millions of happy hearts. It may be submerged

for a time by the waves of an arrogant scientific spirit that challenges all faith; but it will emerge, like the rock the tide overflows, only polished and made brighter by the billows that beat against it! God will do again as he has done before, and take out of some of these very universities a man like Moses, or Paul, or Huss, or Luther, or Wesley, who will contradict it and build again the faith which it destroys. So our first duty is to stand immovably firm for the old faith.

Second, we must hold a hospitable receptive attitude toward even the destructive higher criticism that will gladly accept all that it can teach us. This is the scriptural attitude we should sustain towards all systems of knowledge. Paul said he was "debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." He was inflexibly loyal to his convictions, but this willingness to receive new truth gave an intellectual dignity to all his thought and made him a real leader among men. He was one of the most liberal, and at the same time, one of the most positive of men. John rushed out of the bathhouse when he heard that Cerinthus, the heretic, had come in; but Cerinthus was not merely an unbeliever, he was a scoffer. And then John was not always right in his radical opposition to error. Jesus had to rebuke his intolerant spirit. Many of these higher critics are devout spiritual men. We dishonour ourselves and do them grave injustice if we accuse them of want of

fidelity to God because they hold erroneous views. Jonathan Edwards, who was called "The metaphysician of New England," was a most godly man, and was instrumental in a widespread revival of religion; yet any one who reads Bledsoe's *Theodicy* knows that Edward's whole system of thought was a stupendous mass of error. Of course, there is a vast difference between error that exalts God and error that degrades him; between the error that exaggerates the inspiration of the Bible and the error that denies it. But we want no spirit of "Germanism" in our conflict with error. We must speak the truth in love.

I defy any one, though he may have the brains of an Edwards and the intellectual ingenuity of the traditional Philadelphia lawyer, to harmonise the views of such men as Lyman Abbott, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Roger W. Babson, and I might name many more, with the teachings of St. Paul. If they are right in their views of Christianity, Paul was wrong; and if Paul was wrong, then away goes the "faith of our fathers"! The greatest foe to vital Christianity to-day is the so-called "liberalism" of modern thought. Bishop Warren A. Candler, who, both by voice and pen, has valiantly defended the faith, recently had a strong article in the church papers, under the title *Will Just Any Religion Do?* After quoting Dr. Fosdick's "liberal" sentiments about Christianity being a growing religion, Bishop Candler says: "If these pompous words mean any-

thing, they signify that Dr. Fosdick does not regard the Christian religion as a final revelation, but as a transient and changeful product evoked from the religious spirit of man, and that this process of evolution has not yet reached its goal, but will continue to cast its mutable products through all the generations to come. Our Christianity, according to this agile doctor, is different from that of our fathers, and the Christianity of our children will differ from ours, and theirs in turn will differ from that of their children and children's children. St. Paul seems to have foreseen that there would be men of this sort, but he does not seem to have approved them. He speaks of them in this wise: 'Ever-learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.' "

Well said; but I doubt if Dr. Fosdick believes that St. Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, from which the Bishop quotes. And, then, who was St. Paul anyhow, but a good man, honestly living up to the light he had, but who has been left far behind in the progress we have made! That is the modern view of St. Paul. Put over against Fosdick's idea of Christianity not being "a finished article," and Babson's economic conception of religion, St. Paul's tremendous statement in his Epistle to the Galatians. Nobody doubts that he wrote this Epistle—not even the higher critics in

Chicago and Yale, Emory and Dallas! Look: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And as if to emphasise it, and make it unmistakably clear, he repeats it: "As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed!" That looks to me like St. Paul believed Christianity is a "finished" thing, and intended us to believe it, and put a curse on us if we do not!

All of this "liberalism" goes back to the root of Rationalism, the system of thought that rejects the supernatural and explains "revealed religion" according to the principles of human reason. It is superficial and evanescent. It will not shake "the Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," but it will destroy the faith of many. You would not put your money in a bank of doubtful integrity, and you are not likely to "leave all and follow" Christ if his religion is an uncertain thing. Such a conception of Christianity would never have given us "the noble army of martyrs," whose blood became "the seed of the Church."

The time has come again, as it has often come before in the history of the Church, when we must make a decision whether we will believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, or a mere collection of human records, interesting relics of an ancient and obsolete type of religion. In whatever way

you test the modern theory of the Bible, it fails to establish itself as truth. Its internal evidence breaks down, and its "pragmatic sanction" gives way at the touch of reason. It is a vast system of error, and one risks the ruin of the infinite interests of the soul who ventures to build his life upon its rickety foundations.

William James was right; this modern theory of the Bible has given us "a new sort of religion of nature." But the ancient and imperishable view of the Bible as the divinely inspired word of God gives us a supernatural religion; a gospel that is "the power of God unto salvation"; a Christian experience that is the witness of the Spirit with our spirit that we are the children of God; and a baptism of the Holy Ghost for service that inspires a flaming zeal and endues us with celestial power! The whole ministry of the apostles, and especially of St. Paul, was a long and uncompromising conflict with false religion; but the truth they proclaimed blasted the foundations of Paganism, toppled into the dust never to rise again the temples of Diana and the proud shrines of Jupiter Ammon, silenced the babbling oracles of Delphi and Dodona, and the dark cavern of the Cumean Sybil, and scattered their vain philosophies to the winds! How any one who knows what mighty influence resided in the apostolic doctrine of the gospel as the "power of God," and the imperial sweep of its triumph in the Roman Empire, can exchange the supernatural

religion of the old Bible for "the new sort of religion of nature" offered us by the higher critics, passes understanding! This "new sort of religion" is as impotent to cast out demons as the sons of Sceva: "Then certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus, I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house, naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." (Acts xix, 13-17.) There you see the difference between the old-time religion and "the new religion of nature," propounded by the higher critic. There is "power" in the old; but none in the new. The old faith casts out devils; the new flees, naked and wounded, and leaves the field to the foe.

The deep wide river of life, which all must cross, rolls before you. Two bridges are thrown across this foaming flood. One of them is built of wood. Its timbers are of uncertain strength and constantly need repair. It is reared on slender supports, and

the engineers at work on it tell you that the defective material put into it renders it of doubtful safety. Its floor is laid with decaying planks and here and there wide gaps imperil those who attempt to cross upon it. Many have fallen through, and been swept away in the roaring current below. This bridge is the modern Bible. As you approach, the higher critic points you to the bridge, but evades your question as to its security!

The other bridge is built of steel that has been tested in the fires. It was put together by inspired workmen. It is reared on concrete pillars that rest on a foundation of adamant. Its massive beams and solid girders are riveted with bolts made in heaven. Its floor is a pavement of stone, worn smooth by the passage of innumerable travellers to that bourne whence none ever returns. It never needs repair, nor has any ever had occasion to distrust its strength. It is lighted from end to end with brilliant arcs, and the farther end opens upon the gate of Pearl in the city of God. Storms, and floods, and earthquakes have failed to shake its immovable frame! Millions of souls in glory now have safely crossed the flood, and millions more still on the way will find it just as safe! This bridge is the old, old Bible that our mothers loved. Which will you choose?

I will close this message with a quotation from a lecture on the Bible by the Rev. W. E. Munsey, D. D. And remember, he is not speaking of the

mass of mutilated and fragmentary documents of the higher critic, but of the venerable and sacred volume from which his mother taught him in childhood amid the Virginia mountains!

"No book has been so fiercely attacked in every age as the Bible. And after its teachings had conquered the civilisation of the world, and that civilisation became professedly Christian, that civilisation went over to the devil, and the church itself tried to burn up all the Bibles in the world; but Church and State, infidel and pagan, criminal and philosopher, have all failed to destroy it. The Bible is no feeble child begging in the streets of our Vanity Fair; but it is a lofty giant, his mother Love, his father God, and his strides over toppling thrones and down the ages have awakened the dead! He shakes thunders from his flowing hair, and his armour shines like the sun. The breath of God was the furnace blast, and Horeb's top the anvil, when Jehovah forged his helmet, breastplate and buckler; and the infant Jesus gave him a sword out of heaven's armoury; and while John fell worshipping, the stars danced in the sky to the song of the angels, when this giant was commissioned to take the world! Kill him? Kill an archangel? Kill the Lord of Glory again? Kill God? Priest and infidel, get out of the way! God's eternal truth owns the eternal years, and the Bible will yet be the code of all nations, the arbiter of all questions, the referee in all disputes, the grand court of appeal for the

world, and the Bible and Jesus will be king of the world! Go on, blessed old Book! Let wicked men scoff. Go on, and teach the rich man how to use his wealth and the poor man how to be happy in his cabin—teach all men the way of salvation; and when we die give us a promise and hope of immortality, and kindle a light in our graves which all hell cannot blow out—and you will have done for us what all the world's philosophy never dreamed of!"

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught." (2. Thess. 2, 15.)

II

GENESIS IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE

II

GENESIS IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE

WE enter the Bible through the first chapter of Genesis. It is one of the noblest documents in the literature of mankind. It rises like a magnificent arch over the cradle of creation, glorious in its beauty and imperishable strength. It is constructed out of scientific truth, each truth a solid pearl brought from the depths of eternity and lifted to its place by the mighty force of inspiration. Its lofty keystone blazes with the ineffable inscription: "In the beginning God,"—and all that follows is only the logical unfolding of that primal truth. The walls of this mighty archway into the temple of divine knowledge flame with gems of truth that reveal the love of God in the creation of man. Here on the very entrance to the Bible, we find the great fundamental truths of our faith indelibly inscribed: the existence of God; the unity of God; the personality of God; the wisdom, power and goodness of God; the government of God; the fundamental order of nature; the origin of man; the free agency of man, with its mighty implications; the sovereignty of man over all terrestrial nature; the mission of man on the earth;

and the broad and indestructible basis of optimism in the declaration of God that all things are good.

The message of the first chapter of Genesis is that "all's law and all's love" in the universe. When we look at nature through this great arch, the tiniest flower at our feet and the mightiest sun flaming in the depths of space alike declare the all-embracing love of God, and the glory of His power. We do not read these meanings into the first chapter of Genesis from later knowledge. They were there from the first, the elemental verities of all religion, and all science, and all philosophy, and the immutable foundations of a rational faith. He was right who said that "the first leaf of the Mosaic records has more weight than all the folios of men of science and philosophers." It gives us a vast outlook upon life.

In his book, *Keynote Studies in Keynote Books of the Bible,*[1] Dr. Alphonzo Smith says: "No single chapter in the Old Testament so impresses me with its inherent greatness as the first chapter of Genesis. Some of the Psalms and a few chapters in Isaiah strike a note of higher rhapsody. In sheer intellectuality the twentieth chapter of Exodus goes beyond it. But in its blend of beauty and power, in the recurrent beat of its planetary rhythms, in the consciousness of a great truth adequately embodied at last, in a certain proud disdain of all embellish-

[1] *Keynote Studies,* etc., p. 34.

ment except that which attends unsolicited upon great thought greatly expressed, the first chapter of Genesis seems to me alone and unapproached. . . .

"This chapter abolished mythology throughout the civilised world. There were doubtless mythological germs among the Hebrews themselves; but this chapter sterilised them. Latin, Greek, Norse and Oriental mythology lived on for a while; but the warrant of dispossession had been served, and gods and goddesses, demigods and demigoddesses, naiads and dryads and hamadryads, all had to go. Some of them found refuge in poetry and romance; some in the ornament and complement of oratory; some in the metaphors and smiles of rhetoric. But in exact proportion as the first great thought of the Bible had free circulation among races and nations the big gods and the little gods were doomed. Mythology became a mere toy of the mind. The preface to the Bible had throned one God as the maker and preserver of all. It served as a sort of cosmic Monroe Doctrine announcing to all the old deities that any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of the universe would henceforth be considered dangerous to the well-being of mankind. It had its effect. The dignity and authoritativeness of the announcement, the splendour of the vision it unfolded, the instant appeal it made to what we now call intuitional probability, marked the inauguration of a new era in human thought. There is in fact nothing finer in the Old Testament

than the way in which the author of the first chapter of Genesis takes the elemental timbers of the world and cleans them of all the incrustations that had gathered upon them. Earth, water, night, sun, moon, stars,—think what Greek and Roman intellects had done with these, how buried they were beneath the sediment of bizarre fancy and grotesque history. There is not a verse in this chapter that does not by its mere omissions register an altitude of spirit immeasurably beyond all that had gone before."

This testimony is true. And it is a fine estimate of the intellectual grandeur and spiritual value of the entrance to God's Westminster Abbey. The glory of the interior will be found to correspond to the majestic beauty of the entrance. One has only to read the first chapter of Genesis along with the Chaldean and Babylonian narratives of creation, and the mythology of all the peoples of antiquity, to realise the enormous difference between them, and cannot help asking himself the question, how are we to explain the fact that the Hebrews alone of all the ancient people attained to such rational ideas? In his book, *Christ and Science,* Dr. Francis H. Smith says:[1] "Contrast with the simplicity, the clearness, the scientific parallelism of the Bibical account, that of the so-called Babylonian Creation Tablets. Their utterances are nebulous and vague; often so obscure that one may find in them what he

[1] *Christ and Science,* p. 127.

brings to them. One of them makes beasts the first creation; another puts man at the beginning, and their order is incomplete and unscientific. . . . The writer of the first chapter of Genesis shows a correspondence, not with the science of his time, but with that of three thousand years later, which the accepted doctrine of probabilities makes it impossible to attribute to a fortunate guess." Everything found in the vast collection of clay tablets in the Royal Library of Assyria not only confirms the truth of the Bible, but makes it clear that the first chapter of Genesis stands at the head of the literature of the world. "It still speaks to us," says E. Griffith Jones, "as no other record of the origin of things can do. It strikes a higher and more august note; it plumbs lower depths of feeling; it finds us in a more secret place of the soul, than anything that ancient philosophers or modern scientists can tell us. Neither Homer nor Hesiod, Anaxagoras nor Lucretius, Assyrian tablet nor Egyptian hieroglyphic, Acadian myth nor Sanscrit folklore, any more than the speculations of Spencer or Darwin, Huxley or Haeckel, can touch the sonorous chords—'like the sound of a great Amen'—that vibrate through these grand and pregnant sentences." [1]

The first chapter of Genesis is poetical in its structure. It is translated as prose in our English

[1] *The Ascent Through Christ,* p. 73.

Bible; but it is poetry, and has the literary form of poetry in the original Hebrew. Its stately style, its parallelisms, its rhythms, its refrains, its unity within itself, the nervous energy of its thought, and the picturesque symbolism of its conceptions, all show that it is a poem. Dr. B. F. Cocker says: "It combines with lyric breadth of treatment and stateliness of movement all the compactness of a 'solemn sonnet freighted with a single thought from beginning to end.' Analysis of its interior structure exhibits a most artificial synthesis, founded upon well-known sacred numbers. It has, first, an Exordium, the proemial part. Then it is articulated into six Strophes. Finally there is the Epode, or peroration. The six strophes separate naturally into two groups, in which there is a balance and correlation of parts celebrating the first three and the last three concordant steps in the creative movement—the Strophe and the Antistrophe." [1]

Poetry is the earliest and the highest form of human thought. It is the language of emotion, which is the first and deepest expression of our nature. Prose is the language of reflective thought; poetry the language of the heart; and the Bible speaks from the heart to the heart.

> "Not from a vain or shallow thought
> His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
> Never from lips of cunning fell
> The thrilling Delphic oracle;

[1] *The Theistic Conception of the World*, p. 139.

Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe." [1]

The Bible teems with poetry, lofty and clear, and vivid in its imaginative realism, full of fire and noble spirituality of thought. It is intellectual poetry, the profoundest conceptions of the mind fused in the crucible of religious passion, and poured out in fiery streams of truth. The first chapter of Genesis is a magnificent hymn of creation.

But the first chapter of Genesis is not simply the language of imaginative thought. It is what is called "didactic poetry," poetry that is intended to teach; it is history and science poetically expressed. We must not carry the theory of its symbolical character to the extent of denying that it is a narrative in broad outline of actual processes of divine power in bringing into existence, and shaping into its final form, the material universe; for, as I shall endeavour to show, its statements conform to our modern scientific conceptions. It is wonderful for its brevity, its simplicity, its comprehensiveness, its fundamental agreement with modern science, the completeness of the picture it presents, and the sustained dignity of its thought. The creation legends of all other nations are full of childish and absurd ideas, as grotesque as they are unreasonable; but

[1] Emerson, *The Problem.*

there is not a thought in the first chapter of Genesis that it is not worthy of the Deity whose work it describes.

Every document must be interpreted in the light of its design. The design of the first chapter of Genesis is not to teach science, but to reveal God as the author of nature. "It says nothing about the forces of nature, the laws of nature, the classifications of natural history, or the size, positions, distances, and motions of the heavenly bodies. From first to last every phenomenon and every law is linked immediately to some act or command of God. It is God who creates, God who commands, God who names, God who approves, and God who blesses. Strike out the allusions to God, and the narrative is meaningless. Clearly it was never intended to teach science. It has obviously one purpose, to reveal and keep before the minds of men the grand truth that Jehovah is the sole creator and Lord of the heavens and the earth; and it leaves the scientific comprehension of nature to the natural powers with which God has endowed man for that end. . . . While we hold that there are no untimely anticipations of scientific discovery in Genesis, yet we expect that when scientific discoveries are made, the congruity and dignity of the moral and religious lesson shall not be defeated and marred. Nay, more, we maintain that the Mosaic cosmogony presents the great principles which really

lie at the basis of a truly scientific interpretation of nature." [1] The great contribution Moses made to the thought of mankind in the first chapter of Genesis was the theistic conception of the world.

But this does not mean that the author of the first chapter of Genesis gave us an unscientific account of creation. The modern theory of the Bible teaches that the first chapter of Genesis is in conflict with modern science. Dr. J. A. Rice says the answers given in Genesis to questions about the origin of things "conflict directly with our modern scientific conceptions," and that "we have now abandoned the effort to harmonise the two, for to do so is to juggle with plain facts." [2]

That is a frank, but serious, statement. Let us examine it: Over against this dogmatic assertion of the Higher Critic we might put the statement of Dr. Alphonzo Smith, who says: "It is to my mind one of the strangest ironies of history that this (first) chapter (of Genesis) should be singled out as distinctively unscientific. It is the one chapter in the Bible that has made science possible. It is the *magna charta* of science. There was no science, and there could be no science, until men recognised that unity, order and progression are inherent in nature's processes. How were men brought to this recognition? Two routes were pos-

[1] *The Theistic Conception of the World*, pp. 136, 137.
[2] *The Old Testament in the Life of the World To-day*, p. 136.

sible; (1) They could accept the unity, order, and progression of Genesis, and on this presupposition proceed to verification; (2) without knowledge of or belief in Genesis they could experiment independently, and thus arrive by induction at a knowledge of the orderliness or potential science inherent in nature. Now the history of science proves unmistakably that the first method was that actually followed. The founders of modern science, those on whom the great nineteenth century scientists built, were Bacon, Kepler, Galileo, Harvey, and Newton. These men believed that there was 'mind,' 'thought,' 'Almighty power,' 'design,' intelligence,' 'an intelligent Agent' in nature. They believed it, not because they had proved it; proof came later. They believed it because Genesis affirmed it." [1] If it should be objected that Dr. Smith is a specialist in the field of English literature, and is not a scientist, the retort might be easily made that Dr. Rice is a specialist in the field of Biblical literature, and is not a scientist.

To put the matter at rest let me quote from one who is a master of science, as well as a life-long student of the Bible, so that one hardly knows which to admire most, his intimate knowledge of nature, or his profound acquaintance with Holy Scripture,—Dr. Francis H. Smith, *nomen clarum et venerabile*, for fifty years Professor of Natural Science in the University of Virginia. When invited to deliver the Cole

[1] *Keynote Studies in Keynote Books*, etc., pp. 45, 46.

Lectures at Vanderbilt University, Dr. Smith took as his subject "Christ and Science," and we might offer his whole book in refutation of the idea that there is any serious conflict between the Bible and Science. But he expressly says that "the writer of the first chapter of Genesis shows a correspondence not with the science of his time, but with that of three thousand years later,"[1] that is, with the science of to-day. Dr. Rice, the literary critic, says that the attempt to show a harmony between the Mosaic account of creation and modern science is to "juggle with plain facts." Dr. Smith, the scientist, says the Mosaic account shows a correspondence with modern science. Any one who studied science under Dr. Francis H. Smith, one of the most conscientious of teachers, will smile at the idea that he "juggled with plain facts"!

By the way, of all the expert jugglers with "plain facts" on the face of this terrestrial globe, the Higher Critics of the Bible are the champions. Alexander the Great was very fond of the artist, Apelles, and frequently visited his studio. One day he so exposed his ignorance in discussing art, that Apelles gave him a polite hint to change the subject, as the boys who were grinding the colours were laughing at him! The story is suggestive. My own studies have led me to believe that there is a fundamental agreement between the Mosaic account of creation and our modern scientific conceptions; and

[1] *Christ and Science*, p. 127.

this substantial harmony between the Bible and modern science greatly strengthens my faith, for it strikes the roots of our religion deep into the constitution of the world. I do not profess to speak as a scientist, and have not forgotten, as a theologian, the classic adage: *"Ne sutor ultra crepidam,"*—let the cobbler stick to his last. Nor am I afraid to face the issue if it should go against my claim that modern science confirms the Mosaic narrative; for my faith rests on immutable foundations of Christian experience. It is a question of fact: Does the account of creation given in the first chapter of Genesis conflict with modern science? Are we juggling with facts when we seek to harmonise the two accounts? It was a profound observation of Bacon that "Truth is more readily derived from error than from confusion." Cicero said that one of the most essential things in debate is clearness of definition. Heavy fogs abound in these latitudes, and many a craft has come to grief through losing its bearings. Let us look at some highly important preliminary considerations,—take our bearings as it were, and start right by defining our "modern scientific conceptions."

First, what is science? Science is the knowledge of facts—facts that can be demonstrated by observation or actual experiment. "It is the essence of science," said Sir William Thomson, one of the most distinguished of the British scientists, "to infer antecedent conditions, and anticipate future evolu-

tions, from phenomena which have actually come under observation." According to this, nothing can strictly be called science of which we cannot affirm that we know it to be true.

Second: Every scientific fact is surrounded by a wide zone of undiscovered truth. It is in this zone of speculation that all conflicts between religion and science have occurred. It is therefore of the highest importance to keep this distinction in mind. Illustrations of this difference between real science and scientific conjecture are numberless. One of the highest authorities on the subject of ether, that fairy-land in which the scientific imagination revels and rears such fantastic creations out of atoms and molecules and electrons and "ions," was the famous Clerk-Maxwell.[1] He reached the conclusion by purely theoretical reasoning that a ray of light exerts a pressure on the object it strikes. But this was theory until an eminent scientist in Europe, and two distinguished American scientists, by simultaneous, but independent, experiment demonstrated it to be a fact. It is a fact that the anatomical structure of all the vertebrate animals is on the same general plan; but that the various species of animals have been developed from each other is not science, but speculation. And so on through a whole world of mystery, suggested by the terms radium, radioactivity, argon, neon, krypton, Mendelism, Zeeman effect, and countless more.

[1] *Miracles of Science*, p. 110.

Third: The object of science is to find out the method of nature. If we ask any scientist, let it be a scientist who is also a Christian, like Sir Oliver Lodge, or an atheist, like Ernest Haeckel, what is the method by which nature works, they will both promptly answer that nature works by the method of Evolution. But when you pronounce the word "Evolution" you excite a perfect babble of debate among the scientists themselves. Whose Evolution do you mean, the Evolution of Darwin, or the Evolution of De Vries? The Evolution of Wallace, or the Evolution of Weissmann? There are almost as many varieties of Evolution as there are scientists and some of them are violent in their opinions. One of them says Darwin must be put out of court. "We stand," he says, "on the eve of a scientific bankruptcy whose consequences are as yet incalculable. Darwinism is to be stricken from the list of scientific theories." [1] It may be unscientific and intemperate language to say, as an eminent scientist does, that "The whole enormous intellectual labour (of Darwin) was in vain"; but it proves that science has not yet laid down the routes across the mysterious sea of Evolution, and that it is a hazardous thing to sail amidst these fogs. In the light of such uncertainty, or rather in the absence of light, it is evident that the idea of man's descent from an ape ancestry remains what Kant called it, "a daring adventure of the reason."

[1] *The Spiritual Interpretation of Nature,* p. 126.

"Meantime," says Drummond, "all prudent men can do no other than hold their judgment in suspense, both as to the specific theory of one department of Evolution which is called Darwinism, and as to the factors and causes of Evolution itself. No one asks more of Evolution at present than permission to use it as a working theory. . . . While many of the details of the theory of Evolution are in the crucible of criticism, and while the field of modern science changes with such rapidity that in almost every department the text-books of ten years ago are obsolete to-day, it is fair to add that no one of these changes, nor all of them together, have touched the general theory itself except to establish its strength, its value, and its universality." [1] Christian faith has nothing to lose, but much to gain, by accepting the scientific principle of Evolution. In its broad conception it is the scientific equivalent of the theological doctrine of the immanence of God in nature, a conception as old as the Bible itself.

"In any discussion of the relations of scientific and religious thought," says Simpson, "Evolution will find a place if only because of its potency as a unifying agent in the world of data. The conception of the unity of knowledge naturally suggests the idea of foundation lines along which this stately temple shall be built. Such a foundation line is Evolution, extending so far as is known through

[1] *The Ascent of Man*, pp. 6, 7.

every department of knowledge, and offering a beautiful example of the mutual benefit to one another of the scientific and the theological outlooks on God and the world. . . . In Evolution men have come to perceive God's method of creation in time, even as gravitation deals with the relations of things in space." [1] Evolution, properly understood, does not separate nature from God, but brings God into nature, so that what we call natural law is but the mode of the divine activity. "The affirmation of natural laws," says Simpson, "is the affirmation of something more than a series of sequences; it is the acknowledgment of a persistent and sustaining cause of these sequences which we are driven to find in the divine energy itself—energy expressive of and emanating from the Divine will." We may leave the problem of Evolution to the scientists, confident that whatever solution they may discover it will confirm and establish the truth of religion.

Meantime it will help us to maintain a kind and sympathetic attitude toward science to remember the words of Sir E. Ray Lankester in a Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science: "Men of science," he said, "seek in all reverence to discover the Almighty, the Everlasting. They claim sympathy and friendship with those who, like themselves, have turned away from the more material struggles of human life, and have

[1] *The Spiritual Interpretation of Nature*, p. 126.

set their hearts and minds on the knowledge of the Eternal." Evolution is certainly one of our "modern scientific conceptions." Does Genesis conflict with it?

While the details of the theory of Evolution are still in "the crucible of criticism," the general conception of the principle is clear, and it is with that that we have to deal in this discussion. All are agreed that Evolution is, first, a *gradual,* and not an instantaneous process. Second, it is a *consecutive,* and not a disconnected, process. Professor Le Conte called it, "a continuous progressive change." It is a development or unfolding, a process in which what comes after comes out of what has gone before, and has the relation of cause and effect. Third, it is a *cumulative* process, a process of growth from within, of progress from little to more, from simple to complex, from a lower to a higher order. Fourth, it is a *harmonious* process, a process in which all the details combine to produce a rational result. I will add a fifth fact about Evolution, to which it seems to me the scientists do not attach sufficient importance in their discussion of it, and that is, *it is a process that develops a design that was in the process from the beginning.* Evolution is essentially teleological. "Creative Evolution" is a contradiction of terms. Evolution creates nothing. It only brings out a predetermined end. You can only evolve what is involved.

We see all of this going on in nature all around

us. Take the massive oak under whose shade you love to sit when the sun is hot; it is the evolution of the acorn—the gradual, consecutive, cumulative, and harmonious unfolding of the *design* of the oak tree. This does not mean that the whole oak tree, the huge trunk, and the limbs, and branches, and twigs, and countless leaves, were in the acorn in an embryo form; but it means that there was a vital principle in the acorn that caused it to take up the chemical elements of the soil, and atmosphere, and sunlight, and mould them into an oak tree. And that design was in the acorn from the first, and was an essential attribute of it. It was the immutable law of its nature to grow into an oak, and not into a pine tree. Within certain limits it is possible by artificial methods to modify these effects, as Burbank has demonstrated in the botanical world; but by no means can nature be tortured into violating her fundamental laws. A chicken is always hatched from the egg of a chicken, and by no sort of biological juggling can you hatch a pony out of a turkey egg, or get a canary bird from the egg of an eagle. Design, or purpose, is the basic principle of Evolution.

Evolution as thus defined is but a diagram of the rational processes of the mind. Its principles are the laws of thought. It is a process that conforms to the fundamental activities of human consciousness. So when we say that nature works by the method of Evolution, we simply say that nature is

rational, and works by the method of intelligence. And let us do Darwin justice. He was not an atheist, or responsible for the abuse of his theory. He says:[1] "There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed *by the Creator* [Italics ours] into a few forms, or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on, according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." Perhaps so, but that "view of life" is now largely disproven.

A brief glance at the general subject of Evolution was necessary to our discussion of the question whether the Mosaic account of creation given in the first chapter of Genesis is in conflict with our modern scientific conceptions. I now proceed to show that the Mosaic account, without pretending to be a scientific document, is in remarkable harmony with modern science. Bear in mind that Moses wrote in broad outline, and with the distinct purpose of giving the necessary background for the history of the human race, its fall into sin, and its redemption in Christ. Yet note the correspondence of the Genesis narrative with our "modern scientific conceptions."

First: Science says the world was made by a gradual process; so does Genesis. Admit the exist-

[1] *Origin of Species*, p. 429.

ence of God, and, of course, He might have made the world in an instant. I say He might have done it as a mere exercise of power; but no attribute of the Deity has been more misunderstood and abused than His omnipotence. God is omnipotent, but His power is never exerted irrationally, and to create such a world as this world in an instant of time would be an irrational act. God is not a magician, but Infinite Reason. As a matter of fact, Genesis tells us that God was six days in making the world; so that if you take the term "day" to mean a period of twenty-four hours, it would still be a gradual work. Possibly Moses was thinking of six literal days; but if he was the Holy Spirit guided him in writing to use a word that not only means a literal period of twenty-four hours, but also indefinite time. Every intelligent person knows that the term "day" is used in the Bible for indefinite time. Jesus told the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." He meant that Abraham foresaw the period of time which we call the Christian era, and which has now lasted for nearly two thousand years. Some have charged that this construction of the term day has been forced on the theologians by modern science, in their effort to harmonise Genesis and Geology; but they are mistaken, for it is the interpretation given by Augustine, and Origen, and Basil, and all the early Church scholars, ages before modern science was born. There is simply no conflict at this point. Moses said creation was a

gradual process; and modern science confirms his account.

Second: Science says that the world was made by a consecutive, or progressive, process; so does Genesis. We have seen that the whole subject of the *nature* of Evolution is still in debate; and that such eminent scientists as Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace held opposite views about the particular method of Evolution. Moses deals only in broad outlines, but his account of creation shows as clearly as any scientific scheme a closely linked succession of biological events, the nature of whose connection is the subject of scientific investigation. There is a regular advancement in the Genesis account, just such as we find in the record of the rocks and the researches of the naturalist. There is no conflict at this point, but a general correspondence between the outline of science and the Bible.

Third: Science says the world was made by a cumulative process; so does Genesis. It grew from less to more, from simple to complex, from inorganic to organic, from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, from the lower order of animals to man. And it grew by means of what Dr. Le Conte called "resident forces," *i. e.,* vital energies within the organism itself, not by mechanical forces acting on it from without. Moses only reveals the origin of these "resident forces" in the will of God. You may take any chart of the physical history of

the earth as disclosed by geology, and you will find that the Genesis account parallels it. The order in Genesis is the same that science affirms of nature; the inorganic precedes the organic, the vegetable the animal, the lower animals the higher, and all culminate in man. Science gives us first an age of formless matter; so does Genesis. "And the earth was without form and void." Science gives us next an age of fire, a luminiferous ether, quivering with radiant energy and molecular activity; so does Genesis: "And God said, Let there be light." And what is most wonderful, Moses describes this activity as caused by the Spirit of God moving upon the vapours; thus anticipating the profound conception of modern theistic science, which affirms that all force in the final analysis is spirit-force. Science gives us next an age of atmosphere, when the cooling and condensing vapours assumed an aeriform condition, and there was a division of the solid and liquid elements under the action of gravity, producing an expanse, or firmament; so does Genesis. Science gives us next an age of rain, when the oceans were gathered together, and the dry land appeared; so does Genesis.

Science gives us next an age of plant life, when bioplasm, or the lowest form of vitalised matter, made its appearance; so does Genesis. Science says that in the physical history of the globe it was shrouded for a long period in a dense mass of cloud or steam; but in the course of its development

the skies cleared, and the heavenly bodies became visible; so does Genesis. It is superficial criticism that says according to Moses the sun was "created" *after* the earth. Moses had already affirmed that "in the beginning God created the heaven," using the universal term, and "the earth," putting the earth after the heaven. Obviously he meant by God's making "two great lights," not only to reaffirm that God created these heavenly bodies, then the object of heathen worship, but also to say that they did not become visible until a comparatively late period, and this is exactly what science says about them. Science says that in the biological history of the world animal life began with the order of fishes, and that molluscs came before fishes, fishes before reptiles, reptiles before birds, birds before animals, and animals before man; so does Genesis. I find no conflict with our modern scientific conceptions here, but fundamental harmony. And remember that Moses said all of this three thousand years before science found it out!

Fourth: Science says the world was made by a harmonious, or orderly process; so does Genesis. If we trace the physical history of the globe back far enough, according to the geological record, we reach a period when it was a mass of glowing, fiery matter. "At the temperature which would fuse the mass of the rocks, all the more volatile substances could only exist in the form of an elastic

vapour surrounding the earth. All the carbon in the world must have existed in the form of carbonic acid; all the sulphur as sulphurous acid; all the chlorine as chlorhydric acid; all the water as an invisible elastic vapour, extending out beyond the limits of the present atmosphere. There could hence be upon the earth no vegetation, no animals, no limestone, no salt, no gypsum, no water. All that we now behold must have been represented by a glowing liquid nucleus, enveloped in a dense atmosphere of burning acrid vapours. Here was chaos." [1] If we could have looked upon it then, we could have seen little, or nothing to suggest the world we now live in; and yet order, and beauty, and life, and all the infinite details of the world as we know it to-day were "germinating in the heart of universal discord." This is the testimony of science, and Genesis says the same thing, and brings a cosmos out of a chaos, a world which shows design, order, and beauty out of a primeval earth that was "without form and void."

Finally: Science says that man was the ideal toward which nature worked from the beginning; so does Genesis. "From this pinnacle of matter," says Drummond, "is seen at last what matter is for, and all the lower lives that ever lived appear as but the scaffolding for this final work. The whole subhuman universe finds its reason for existence in its

[1] Winchell, *Sketches of Creation*, p. 49.

last creation, its final justification in the new immaterial order which opened with its close. . . . Plant and animal each have their end, but man is the end of all ends. The latest science reinstates him, where poet and philosopher had already placed him, as at once the crown, the master, and the rationale of creation." [1] Any one who reads the first chapter of Genesis must see that Moses had placed man as "the crown, and master, and rationale of creation" ages before philosopher, or poet, or modern scientist had enthroned him as "the end of all ends." Modern science has only illuminated his progress to the throne. The poet has only expressed the heart of the first chapter of Genesis when he sings in stately rhyme:

> "From harmony to harmony this universal frame began;
> From harmony to harmony through all the compass of its notes it ran,
> The diapason closing full in man."

So far we fail to find any conflict between Genesis and our modern scientific conceptions, but on the contrary, a remarkable correspondence. We pause here to ask, how else than upon the theory of inspiration, in the sense of a supernatural influence on the mind of the sacred writer that held him unconsciously to the fundamental truth of nature, can you explain how Moses understood what it has taken science more than three thousand years to discover? Is not this fundamental harmony a profound proof

[1] *The Ascent of Man*, p. 114.

of the vital unity between nature and revelation? Was not the great Kepler right when, as he studied the heavens, he exclaimed, "I think thy thoughts, O God!" Dr. Alphonzo Smith says: "Did you ever think of Kant's great saying as an undesigned tribute to Genesis? 'Two things,' he said at the close of his *Critique of Practical Reason,* 'fill the mind with ever increasing admiration and awe the oftener and the more steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.' These were Kant's two admirations, his two reverences, his two infinities, as they are of every man who thinks resolutely about them. 'Necessity is the law of the first,' said Kant, 'and liberty of the second. Is it not remarkable that the first book in the Bible faces precisely the two mysteries that moved the awe of the philosopher, Creation and Probation? The last word of human philosophy is thus the first word of the Bible. The twin summits that have challenged the climbers of all ages are the starting places of Genesis. But there is a difference. To the modern philosopher there were mists upon the summits; to the author of Genesis there was sunlight. Two infinities, but one faith. The synthesis is in the first words of Genesis: In the beginning God.' " [1]

But we have not exhausted the points of correspondence between Genesis and modern science.

[1] *Keynote Studies, etc.,* p. 59.

"Evolution," says Simpson, the eminent biologist in Edinburgh, "is change with continuity of content. This we know to be the case in every instance of individual development. Bird and beast, fish and creeping thing, and man himself, all begin life in a single cell-commence where the Protozoa left off—and so pass through many different stages into the adult organism of their kind. In this instance the terms of the series obviously have genetic connection. If Evolution implies continuity, it is inconsistent with the idea of 'breaks' in the succession. A clear understanding at this point would mean the solution of half of our difficulties." Dr. Simpson denies that there have been any "breaks" in the continuity of nature: "Evolution is continuous change; it is continuity, and God has been immanent from the beginning. In the process there is a great deal that is little understood, and much that is unknown, but the days are past when the unknown, the gap in our knowledge, is emphasised as the sure abode of the divine." [1] One need hardly fear to follow such a devout believer in his *Spiritual interpretation of Nature;* but we must hold even Dr. Simpson strictly to the scientific lines, and when he says "there are no gaps" in the continuity of nature, he is on speculative and not scientific ground. He assumes that these "gaps" will be filled, and he may be right. But at the present, as I shall show you

[1] *The Spiritual Interpretation of Nature,* p. 130.

from the testimony of the scientists themselves, they are not yet explained.

There are myriads of "missing links" in the endless chain; but there are three great outstanding "breaks" in the scientific continuity of nature: the origin of matter; the origin of life; and the origin of mind. Science cannot explain the origin of matter. Tyndall said that science has nothing to do with the question of origins, and that they belong to the domain of metaphysics. No matter where they belong, we have to deal with them in any attempt at a rational explanation of the world; and scientists have not escaped from the obligation to give some answer to them. Some, like the atheist, Haeckel, say that matter is eternal; others like Maxwell, held that the fact that matter presents "the essential characteristics at once of a manufactured article and a subordinate agent, precludes the idea of its being eternal and self-existent. It must have been created." But in any case, it is all speculation. The fact is that science cannot explain the origin of matter.

Science cannot explain the origin of life. It can trace it to a primal physical basis in "protoplasm," and locate it in a microscopic "cell," which lies embedded in the protoplasm "like a bright globular spot." But how it starts no scientist knows. After all their efforts to produce life from non-living, or dead matter, it is still true that life only comes from life. Some scientists claim that "with the use of a

platinum needle and electricity," they "have been able to cause the development of unfertilized eggs of the frog." And one suggests that the time may come when there may be offspring without paternity. But all of this is fantastic speculation. Haeckel suggested that the germs of life may have reached the earth from some other planet on a meteor. That does not explain the origin of life. It only transfers the mystery to some other world, and shows that some scientists have vivid and audacious imaginations. The scientific fact is that science cannot explain the origin of life.

Science cannot explain the origin of mind. Scientific research on this subject has been exhausted. Some of the greatest scientists have concentrated their highest powers on the question and have not solved it. Darwin believed that mind in animals and men was the same, differing only in degree; but he was too much of a logician to think that this identity explained the origin of mind. He said: "In what manner the mental powers were first developed in the lowest organisms is as hopeless an inquiry as how life itself first originated." [1] Mr. Romanes, one of the highest authorities, said: "I am as far as any one can be from throwing light upon the intrinsic nature of the probable origin of that which I am endeavouring to trace"—namely, self-consciousness.[2] Drummond quotes Huxley as say-

[1] *Descent of Man*, p. 66.
[2] *Mental Evolution in Man*, pp. 194-5.

ing, in the name of Biology: "I know nothing, and I never hope to know anything, of the steps by which the passage from molecular movement to states of consciousness is effected." Drummond also quotes the famous German physiologist, Du Bois-Reymond, as saying: "It is all through and forever inconceivable that a number of atoms of Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Oxygen, and so on, shall be other than indifferent as to how they are disposed, and how they move, how they were disposed and how they were moved, how they will be disposed and how they will be moved. It is utterly inconceivable how consciousness shall arise from their joint action." [1] And Drummond himself says: "At the present moment the ultimate origin of mind is as inscrutable a mystery as the origin of life."

Darwin, Romanes, Huxley, Du Bois-Reymond, Drummond, and many more, refute Dr. Simpson's statement that there are no "breaks" in the continuity of nature. It is immaterial to our discussion what science may do hereafter in mending these "breaks"; what I am trying to show you is that Genesis agrees with science up to date. What has Genesis to say about these "breaks"? Does it correspond with modern science here?

There are three "breaks" in nature in the first chapter of Genesis, and what is most remarkable, they occur in precisely the places where they are

[1] *The Ascent of Man*, p. 125.

found in the scheme of scientific Evolution—the origin of matter, the origin of life, and the origin of mind. Dr. Simpson says the old theology filled these gaps with the Deity, and he is right. And it is far better to find God in these abysms than to leave them only a vast emptiness, or a cloudland of speculation. In his account of creation, Moses makes a remarkable use of the Hebrew word *bara.* The etymological root of this word is "to cut"; but according to eminent Hebrew scholars,[1] if a writer wished to use a word to express the idea of creation as the bringing of something new into existence, he would use the word *bara.* Moses uses this word *bara* three times, evidently with intention and special discrimination, and in the sense of an absolute creation, and he uses it in precisely the places where science fails to explain nature, the origin of matter, the origin of life, and the origin of mind.

The first "break" in Evolution is between cause and effect, or the origin of matter. Science is unable to explain it, and simply says: "Agnosco"—I don't know. But Moses says: "In the beginning God *bara*—created—the heaven and the earth," brought into existence the material out of which the universe is built. That links up creation with an adequate First Cause, and gives you a rational starting point. There is no conflict between Genesis and our "modern scientific conceptions" here. Both say there is a gap, but Moses closes it.

[1] *The Theistic Conception of the World,* p. 57.

The next "break" in the chain is in regard to the origin of life. Science skips it, flies across in an airplane of speculation, and leaves it gaping wide, a grand canyon in the realm of our knowledge of nature. But Moses closes it: "And God *bara*—created—great marine animals," or as our version puts it, "great whales." Moses was writing with a religious purpose, and his object was to assert that the huge monsters of the ocean were not objects for worship, as the heathen believed; but were creatures of God. The point of correspondence with science here is that he places the origin of animal life in the order of fishes, and he puts fishes before birds. This is exactly the teaching of science. According to science, animal life, life as a principle involving sensation, feeling, perception, memory, locomotion, and self-direction; life as an individualised and indivisible centre of force; life as distinguished from bioplasmic or vegetable life—this sort of life began with the order of fishes. It was a new thing in nature, and could not be evolved out of anything already made. Moses says God created it. There is no conflict between Genesis and modern science here. Both say there is a gap, but Moses closes it.

The third "break" in Evolution is in regard to the origin of mind. Again the scientist exclaims, "Agnosco"—I don't know; again Moses uses that word *bara*—"so God *bara*—created—man in his own image." Man's spirit was not evolved out of the

dust, but inbreathed by the Almighty, and man became, in pre-eminent distinction above all the rest of the creation, a "living soul." Man stands alone in the possession of the regal and superior powers of a rational nature. No animal exhibits the kind of mentality we call reason—the power to hold self as an object of reflective thought, or self-consciousness; the sublime attribute of a will, which is more than simple self-direction, and involves the synthesis of reason and power in conscious moral freedom; the faculty of religion, or sense of responsibility to God, with all the implications of a spiritual life; and above all, the capacity of boundless progress. Animal intelligence often excels our own; but it is static, and remains always the same. The beaver builds its dam, the bee its cell, the eagle its nest, the spider its web to-day just as they did a thousand years ago; but man has "sought out many inventions" and is continually enlarging his knowledge and improving his condition. There is no conflict here between Genesis and modern science. Both say there is a measureless gap between man and the animals, but Moses closes it.

Again we ask, how did Moses know just where the breaks in the Evolution series of modern science would occur? How did he know at what places in his narrative to use a word that means to bring something into existence whose origin science is unable to explain? In view of all these considerations, I think we are fully justified in the conclusion

that they are mistaken who say that Genesis conflicts with our modern scientific conceptions. There is a profound and wonderful harmony between Genesis and modern science. The answers which Genesis gives to questions about the origin of things are not "naïve simplicity," but astonishing forecasts and intimations of coming discoveries of science. The sacred writer was not thinking of science, and knew nothing of it in our modern sense. He was writing with a specific religious purpose; but the Holy Spirit guided him to unconsciously sketch an outline of creation which would be true to modern scientific conceptions. Such great scientists as Sir Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday, Clerk-Maxwell, Agassiz, Dana, Winchell, Henry Drummond, Francis H. Smith, and a host besides, have found no conflict between Genesis and modern science that disturbed their faith in the sacred narrative as a divine revelation. The first chapter of Genesis is unapproached in the literature of the world in the grandeur of its subject and the sublimity of its treatment. It should fill the soul with awe to find such evidence of divine inspiration in the very opening of the Holy Scriptures. Well may we enter this temple of knowledge with uncovered heads and reverent minds, for these precincts are holy.

Let us mount the chariot of thought, and in imagination, transport ourselves swifter than the lightning's flash, back into the distant past, back

beyond the birth of time, and watch the creation of the world. By hypothesis, naught exists except God and ourselves. No star twinkles in the darkness. No life throbs in the vast vacuity. No sound breaks the silent stillness that reigns over the realms of primeval emptiness. The mighty drama begins with the background of eternity, from whose unfathomable mystery Almighty God emerges to create the heavens and the earth. The pageant of creation is introduced by the august prelude: "In the beginning God!" Suddenly we become conscious that action has begun, and gigantic cycles of creative energy are rolling onward in magnificent sequence and in rhythmic order. The everlasting silence is broken by the fiat, "Let light be," and instantly the impalpable ether flashes into being, quivering like a luminous mist through the boundless void. Primal and immutable laws begin to work in the mighty womb of nature. Elemental forces begin to stir in the abysmal depths. Under the influence of gravity countless centres of attraction arise in the luminous mist, and around them gather the glowing materials of future systems of suns and planets. As the dateless eons wear away, gigantic nebulæ roll asunder, and whirling into shining globes of glowing and condensing matter, swing into orbits, and go spinning away across the fields of space, sowing immensity with starry worlds. One of these nebulæ becomes our solar system, and a huge mass of incandescent matter detaches itself to become our

earth, for ages succeeding ages a formless globe whirling on its axis, but agitated and heaving with the brooding activities of the Spirit of God.

As we watch it, we see mysterious molecular forces beginning to work, "homogeneous and unstable, but tending to differentiation and variety; splitting into opposites, standing off in polarities, ramifying into attractions and repulsions, light, heat, magnetism, and electricity," and endless chemical combinations and reactions. An atmosphere begins to form, and the heated globe condenses the enveloping vapours that fall in torrential rain, and rise in mighty clouds of steam. A vast separation divides the firmament above from the solidifying earth beneath. Mighty cosmic changes, in stately order, prepare the earth for man, as creation unrolls the splendid drama of nature onward to its predestined end. The curtain is lifted, and the sun and moon, and stars appear, moving in dazzling glory across the sky. Time is born, and begins its record in the rhythmic alternations of day and night. Vast continents emerge from the heaving seas, and sink beneath them, then rise again to form the solid land; here bulging into lofty mountain ranges, there spreading out in immense plains and valleys, dotted with gleaming lakes and seamed with shining rivers, waving with primeval forests and carpeted with luxuriant grass. Life appears, first as a simple organising centre of force in protoplasm, giving rise to the lowest vegetable plant, then rising to the

highest forms of the vegetable kingdom, and storing up the coal and oil and gas in the depths of the earth for the use of future ages. Animal life appears, first in the mollusc, or oyster, a mere lump of vitalised marine pulp, but rising rapidly through countless intermediate forms of endless variety of fishes and reptiles to the huge leviathans that swim in the steaming waters, the mighty birds of the air, and the gigantic animals that tread the solid land. All seems complete. The mighty stage is set. All the splendid scenery is arranged, the lofty firmament glitters with stars and flames with suns; the heaving seas teem with life; the verdant earth is astir with living creatures. All nature smiles with benevolent design, and the appointed seasons roll in beautiful succession, and God pronounces it "Good"!

But is it finished? To what end was it made? Is there a creature yet made who can understand it? It shows intelligence, and benevolence and power in every detail, but what is the rational end of it all? How useless the gold and the silver and the coal and the iron, and the copper, and all the myriad materials stored in the secret places of the earth, if this is all! But listen. There comes forth from the invisible abode of the Godhead the solemn announcement: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness!"

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God

said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This was the finishing work of the Infinite Artist, the benediction of Almighty God upon his glorious work!

III

THE HEBREW PROPHETS

III

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IF we take Moses as the first, and Malachi as the last, of the Hebrew prophets, we have a period roughly speaking of a thousand years, during which this remarkable order of men lived in the world. As we look back now, and see these men in their true perspective, they resemble a distant range of mountains stretching across the plains of history. They are lifted high above the level of the humanity around them, and stand in bold outline against the background of antiquity. The sky-line of this range of human mountains is broken by lofty peaks, like Moses, and Samuel, and Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Amos. Here and there long stretches of mist conceal the course of history, but when the range emerges into view, we see that it is the same system, and ever growing clearer and more distinct. The sunlight of truth rests on all this range of human mountains and plays like a coronal of glory around these summits; and one, Elijah, is a smoking cone crowned with fire, and visible across thirty centuries! If we climb these shining summits, study their massive strength, their grandeur, and their solemn significance in the history of man, and look

out from their heights on the far-sweeping destinies of the race, something of their strength and splendour steals into our hearts; and as our faith is "built upon" them, we realise the solidity of its foundations and the massive grandeur of its truth.

Whatever of truth we hold to-day, we hold because these men lived, and suffered, and spoke with living voices to their times. All the rest of mankind were groping in darkness, "feeling after God, if haply they might find him," but bowing down to idols, and worshipping the work of their own hands. These Hebrew prophets alone had the knowledge of the true God, and the splendid moral idealism that is its natural fruit; and as the ages rolled on they unfolded with ever-increasing clearness God's truth to man. They were unswervingly loyal to their convictions. Nothing could obscure their vision or shake them from the fundamentals of their faith. Their ministry makes the whole history of Israel luminous with spiritual meaning and beauty, and Christianity is only the unfolding of the inner significance of their message. As we look back and see them in their true historic perspective, we must realize our immense indebtedness to them; for their heroic fidelity to their high calling preserved the sacred gift of truth from destruction, and prepared the world for the coming of the Lord of life.

First: The Hebrew prophets were especially inspired by the Holy Ghost to reveal divine truth to

man. They were "sent" by God to teach his people, and were endued with the Holy Ghost for their mission. God "spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." They were "holy men of God, and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They were "the holy prophets," of whom "the world was not worthy." While their utterances were called forth by specific occasions, and were addressed to specific conditions, they had a double significance, and were the revelations of a system of supernatural knowledge. They were conscious of this fact, though they imperfectly understood its meaning. This was the "hidden wisdom" of which St. Paul speaks, the primal purpose of God in Christ, which was formed before the world began, and was gradually made known to man. The prophets were intense students of this deep truth, of which they caught only intermittent and transient glimpses, and "searched diligently" to understand it.

The prophets were not random and ranting talkers like the heathen prophets around them; but intelligent interpreters of the divine will, and spoke with the conscious authority of their high vocation. There is deep significance in the repeated statement that they were "holy" men, holy not in the sense alone that they were separated to their exalted office by a special consecration; but in the deeper sense that they were men who had a profound spiritual experience. They walked and talked with God, and he admitted them to the secrets of his truth and love.

He put his Holy Spirit upon them, and declared them sacrosanct, saying "do my prophets no harm." The indwelling energy of the spirit of Christ stirred them to lofty utterance. Their litanies

> "Came
> Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
> Up from the burning core below,
> The canticles of love and woe."

This is not the doctrine of the prophets set forth by the Higher Critics. They have stripped the prophets of Israel of their mantles of flame, and they come before us almost in the garb of mendicants. A recent writer says that from Moses to Samuel the prophets of Israel were "little more than roving dervishes," and that during that period "the will of God was supposed to be learned from wizards, sorcerers, necromancers, soothsayers, by lot, by the whisper of trees, the flight of birds, the passing of clouds, as well as other signs, omens, etc." [1]

This is true of the heathen, but if there is anything certain in Old Testament history it is that God took special and emphatic pains to protect Israel against such superstition "To the law and to the testimony,"—let that decide. Here is the "law": "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xix, 31.) "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and

[1] *The Old Testament in the Life of To-day*, by J. A. Rice, D.D., p. 33.

after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." (Lev. xx, 6.) "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one . . . that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." (Deut. xviii, 10-11.)

The Higher Critics get rid of all this, so far as it is applicable to the earlier history of Israel, by their theory of the late origin of the Levitical law. They say that Moses did not write Deuteronomy; but Deuteronomy says he did: "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side of Jordan." (Deut. i, 1.) If Moses did not write or dictate Deuteronomy, that is a deliberate lie. It is not a falsehood. A man may tell a falsehood believing it to be the truth; but a lie is a statement known to be false told with the intention to deceive. Whoever wrote that knew that it was either true or false. If he knew it was false, he deliberately deceived us; and if he knew it to be true, then it establishes the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy, and gives validity to his law.

Moses began his administration with a grand demonstration of the eternal difference between the

black arts of the heathen and the miracles of Jehovah. Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and confused Pharaoh with their wonderful magic; but they at last admitted, "This is the finger of God," and gave up the contest. So Israel started out of Egypt with the truth wrought into their experience by a series of stupendous miracles that wizards, sorcerers, necromancers, soothsayers, witches, and magicians, were impostors, and their occult arts were agencies of the Devil. The people did consult them, but they did it in flagrant violation of Divine law; and Isaiah attributed the alienation of Jehovah from his chosen people to the fact that they were "replenished from the east, and were soothsayers like the Philistines." No true prophet supposed the will of God was learned from wizards and soothsayers. He knew better.

And who were the dervishes, to whom they are likened by the Higher Critics? There were no dervishes in the time of the Hebrew prophets. They are religious orders among the Hindus and Mohammedans, and correspond roughly to the mendicant orders of the Roman Catholic Church. There were different classes among them, designated as "dancing," "howling," "whirling" dervishes, according to the particular character of their exercises. Most of them were roving bands of beggars, many of them expert swindlers, and all of them religious fanatics, whose acts of so-called worship consisted in violent physical contortions

without rational meaning. These are the pitiful caricatures to whom the Higher Critics liken the earlier prophets of Israel! As the gradual growth of prophecy from a vague primitive groping after the truth is a fundamental principle of the Higher Criticism, it follows that the earlier the prophet, the less he knew and the more primitive his conceptions and the cruder his worship. This would, of course, make Moses a dervish. As the lofty utterances of Moses, and his whole profound ritual, embodying in its mystic symbolism the mighty truths of redemption that were to come to their full bloom in Christ, could not be reconciled with such a primitive stage of religion, the Higher Critics invented the theory that Moses did not write the Pentateuch to get out of the difficulty!

But their whole theory contradicts the testimony of both the Old and New Testaments, as well as the common sense view of the matter. There was "development" in Hebrew prophecy; but you cannot have "development" without something to "develop"; and the development of prophecy was the gradual and progressive unfolding in the consciousness of Israel's prophets of the primal truth given to Adam, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham in the beginning. Hebrew prophecy was never confounded with the irrational ravings of the heathen prophets. The Higher Critics say that "Saul raved among the prophets." My Bible doesn't say so. It says that "he prophesied among the prophets." But

the Hebrew word means "to rave"—speak incoherently and with excitement bordering on madness. Suppose it does, did not the translators of our English Bible know that as well as the modern scholar? After studying the word in all its meanings, they decided to translate it by the English word "prophesied." They were not obliged to make their philology fit into the theory that Israel was a tribe of Bedouin Arabs and the prophets little more than roving dervishes!

As an illustration of the brilliant logic of the Higher Critics, and a sample of modern thought versus traditional faith, take the explanation they give of Elisha at his meeting with Jehoshaphat and Jehoram. Jehoshaphat had asked Elisha's counsel about going to battle with the three kings of Moab. The Higher Critic says that the "dervishes played upon musical instruments"; so when Elisha asked for a minstrel, they sent him a dervish, "during whose performance, 'the hand of the Lord came upon him.'" The "performance" of the dervish wrought on Elisha's emotions and in some way gave him prophetic intuition. According to that logic some of the greatest modern preachers were little more than dervishes! I have heard Bishop Marvin, not call for a minstrel, but perform the part of one himself, and sing,

> "O, come angel band,
> Come, and around me stand!
> O bear me away on your snowy wings
> To my eternal home!"

and the hand of the Lord not only came upon him, but upon all who heard him, until many of them got excited and as happy as Saul that time he "raved" and shouted among the prophets! According to the Higher Critic's logic, because sacred music stirred the soul of Bishop Marvin, and lifted him to almost seraphic heights, he was little more than a "roving dervish," whose howlings and whirlings and dancings and incoherent mouthings were supposed to be religious exercises.

I have heard the great evangelist, D. L. Moody, just before preaching, call for the "minstrel," Sankey, to sing,

> "There were ninety and nine that safely lay
> In the shelter of the fold;
> But one was out on the hills away,
> Far off from the gates of gold,"

to put his soul in tune for the message on the "Prodigal Son," and under the hand of the Lord that came upon him, give that message with tremendous earnestness; and at the close of the message, the "minstrel" sang again,

> "Almost persuaded now to believe,"

and the hand of the Lord came on hundreds who accepted Christ. According to the logic of the Higher Critic, Moody was little more than a roving dervish because he used music to stir the soul.

It is no proof that Elisha was little more than a roving dervish because he called for music to put

him in tune with God. It was in accordance with the psychology of all religious experience. The use of music in religious worship to excite the emotions is a perfectly normal use of the means of grace, and St. Paul commended it to the Ephesians: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Nothing prepares me so well for preaching, and I speak from an experience of more than fifty years, than to spend the hour before going to the pulpit in prayer and in singing some of the great hymns of the Church. I will have nothing to do with a theory of the Old Testament, which in the name of technical scholarship, and on the basis of a microscopic philological analysis, plays such havoc with all the laws of psychology, and degrades the prophets of the living God to the roving dervishes. I don't wonder that this theory makes infidels of modern Bible readers. If I believed the modern theory of the prophets, I would not waste my time studying them.

But approaching them from the standpoint of the traditional belief in the Bible, I find no trace of heathen frenzy in Hebrew prophecy; nothing that corresponds to the clairvoyant mental states of Hindu sages, or transcendental moods of Mohammedan ecstasy, or rhapsody of Norseman bard, or psychic states of pagan magic. The heathen had their prophets, and the Hebrew prophets were in perpetual and tremendous conflict with them. The

whole difference between the prophets of Israel and the prophets of the heathen was magnificently illustrated by the case of Elijah on Carmel. The prophets of Baal wrought themselves up to a state of excitement verging on madness; they danced and howled around their altar, and leaped in frantic violence about their sacrifice, and cut themselves with knives until their blood flowed, while Elijah mocked them, and poured upon them the ridicule and lofty scorn of his faith. And when their orgy ended, Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood erect, and calm, and rational, and prayed a simple prayer to the living God, and the answering fire fell! This contrast between the wild frenzy of the heathen prophets, and the calm and rational and dignified conduct of the Hebrew prophet was typical of the fundamental difference between the religion of Israel and that of the heathen. According to the Higher Critics, Elijah was a roving dervish, a shaggy, long-bearded Bedouin from beyond Jordan, who straggled into Samaria, and got involved in controversy with the prophets of Baal,—that is, if there ever was such a person, which is doubtful on their theory. According to the traditional view of the Bible, he was a man sent from God at a solemn crisis of Israel's history, and clothed with the power of his Spirit to vindicate the cause of truth.

No, no, no! The prophets of Israel were not dervishes, but men who were filled with the Spirit

of the living God. You cannot explain their peculiar illumination by any principles of psychology, far less resolve them into natural phenomena of neurology, epileptic spasms, auto-intoxications, and mental over-tensions of medical materialism. You cannot class the Hebrew prophets with cunning necromancers, artful manipulators of psychic forces and contemptible jugglers with ouija boards; or confound them with the metaphysical visionaries who babble a fluent nonsense about a "cosmic consciousness" and the "evolution of humanity"; and it is an insult to God to class his prophets with howling beggars, hooded sorcerers, long-haired voodoos, fortune-tellers and fakirs who made merchandise of superstition. You cannot put the prophets of Israel even among the poets, who glimpsing the inner harmony of the world in moments of rare mental exaltation, regale us with their musical idealism! They are far above all human cults.

The "visions," and "woes," and "burdens," and theophanies, and predictions of the prophets were logical deductions from their system of truth and harmonised perfectly with the premises of their faith. Their inspiration was not that of the Delphic tripod, nor did they learn the will of God from the flight of birds or the whisper of the wind in the trees. Their creed was not an abstract philosophy, or the cold speculations of a rational dialectic. No natural psychic process could have lifted these men high enough for them to see what they saw in the

distant future. They received their messages from the Holy Spirit, whose actuating energy on their minds communicated a supernatural knowledge, which had a hidden significance that made their hearts burn within them. They felt their whole nature quivering with the mystic meaning of their message. It was still, and would be for long ages, a "hidden wisdom," until the fulness of the time should come for it to be made known in Christ; but it held them like a mighty magnet, and gave unity, meaning, dignity and power to the whole history of Israel. The uncomprehended attraction turned their faces to the future, and shading their eyes with their hands, they discerned the dim figure of the cross, the symbol of suffering and sacrifice, on the far-off horizon of the ages, in which all their knowledge seemed to centre, and out of which a river of salvation flowed, widening to the uttermost ends of the earth. "Of which salvation they enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come. . . . Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them which have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." You never

can harmonise that exalted New Testament conception of Hebrew prophecy with the theory of the Higher Critics that the prophets were little more than heathen dervishes.

Second: The Hebrew prophets were called of God by a special vocation, and carried divine credentials of their office. It is important to emphasise this point, for the Higher Critics as we have seen, place the Hebrew prophets with the prophets of the heathen. They say that prophecy was "probably taken over from the Canaanites."[1] But in the Bible they appear as a distinct class, and they were called by the definite personal summons of God to their work. "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, (*i. e.,* continually and carefully), and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place." (II Chron. xxxvi, 15.) "See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to throw down, to build and to plant." (Jer. i, 10.) "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them." (Ezek. iii, 4.) "The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos, vii, 15.) God sent them. They spoke with authority.

God called Moses by the Burning Bush; and Sam-

[1] *The Old Testament in the Life of To-day,* p. 33.

uel by the voice in his bed-chamber; and Elisha by the mantle of Elijah; and Isaiah by the vision in the temple; and Jeremiah by the secret whisper in his heart that was like fire in his bones; and Ezekiel by the mystic whirlwind on the banks of Chebar. As Jesus was "driven" by the Holy Spirit into the Wilderness after his baptism, so these men were "driven" by an inward compulsion to their work. It was the impact of God upon their souls. They were "God-intoxicated" men. Sometimes they were priests, like Jeremiah, and sometimes simple laymen like Amos. They belonged to no order, yet themselves form the highest order in the spiritual economy of Israel. Samuel seems to have organised them into a fraternity, or guild, called "The Sons of the Prophets," and they had a recognised official rank; but they were tremendous individualities, free from all the restrictions of hereditary caste and the limitations of sacerdotal office, independent and untrammeled preachers of truth. Yet they were united in a solidarity of thought and purpose and spirit that made them, in striking contrast with the degenerate priesthood of Aaron, the real anchors of the national seriousness and leaders of the national progress. They were the representatives under the monarchy of the old and unchanged theocratic government of Israel, a government in which God was the invisible king, who was immediately represented by his servants, the prophets. For this reason they stood above the kings. They were spiritual tribunes,

with a veto on kings and princes, and were the guardians of the destiny of Israel. They were heroic defenders of the ancient faith, fearless advocates of truth, stern denouncers of idolatry, champions of the rights of man in the largest and truest sense, bulwarks of the divine order of the world, standing immovably firm for righteousness amid the universal corruption around them. They were the pioneers of a true democracy, equally removed on the one hand from the lop-sided individualism that unbalances community life, and on the other from the rigid socialism that destroys the individual.

The grandest thing about the Hebrew prophets is not their sublime doctrines, or their sublimer altruistic spirit, but their intense spiritual earnestness. They flung themselves into the conflict with evil with a flaming abandon. The very name by which they were known meant to *boil,* to *spout,* to *gush,* as though the energies of a moral volcano slumbered in their hearts, and leaped forth in the lightning of their speech. The fabled thunderbolts of Jove were playthings compared with the shafts of truth they hurled. Their words made kings tremble on their thrones and armies flee apace. Heaven was colonised in every heart among them; but it was not a heaven of ethereal ease and ecstatic repose, where the spirit lounged in ambrosial indolence and seraphic inaction; but a heaven of splendid strenuousness of moral endeavour to help Almighty God save a fallen world, beat back the forces of evil, and redeem

humanity: such a heaven as Jesus disclosed when he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."

And they carried the flaming seals of the Holy Ghost on their commission. There are four canons of prophetic validity, the ethical, the dynamic, the doctrinal, and the predictive; and by all these tests the Hebrew prophets stand before the world amply accredited as the ambassadors of heaven. They were "holy men," honest and clean in their character, and utterly unselfish in their motives, as witness Elisha's refusal of the gifts of Naaman. Their message was attested by the power of the Holy Ghost, sometimes immediately, as when the fire fell on Carmel, and always in the end. All their utterances not only harmonised with fundamental truth, but unfolded and enforced it. All their predictions came true to the letter. By these tests the true prophecy was discriminated from the false, which existed then, as it exists now, as a part of that "mystery of iniquity" that works destruction to man. The freshness of the morning is in all the thought of the Hebrew prophets. The beauty of holiness beams in all their messages. A bright halo of truth encircles them and the glory of the Lord shines round about them. Isaiah eloquently describes them: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of joy,

that publisheth salvation; that saith to Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

The world has travelled far along the track of time since the prophets of Israel grappled with the problems of their day; but after centuries of what we call progress and all the enlightenment of the ages, the profoundest analysis of the great mystery we call life can find no deeper, or surer foundations of thought on which to build the universe than the truth proclaimed by these Hebrew prophets. They saw clearly what many world-famous men never saw at all, or seeing would not acknowledge, that this is a rational universe, projected from the beginning on lines of ethical life; and they asserted with all the earnestness of their soul, that righteousness is the eternal and necessary basis of civilisation, and the only foundation on which a stable human society can be built; a righteousness which consists in the free obedience of the conscience to the revealed will of God as the ultimate authority in morals. It is the lucid perception of the spiritual foundations of life, and the consistent, courageous, and inexorable demand for righteousness both in the individual and the nation, that invest the message of the Hebrew prophets with imperishable value and unapproached sublimity.

Third: The Hebrew prophets were great ethical teachers. This perhaps is the most outstanding

fact about them. While the truth they uttered had an ulterior significance of which they were only dimly conscious, the heart of that truth was righteousness, expressed in their ancient law by the command, "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." (Lev. xix, 2.) The motto of their religion was "Holiness to the Lord." It was graven on the crown of pure gold which the High Priest wore, and was the fundamental truth wrought into the very texture of their faith. They put the emphasis of their ministry on righteousness, which meant with them obedience to Almighty God. They were not theorisers, asking, "What is truth?" but announcers of truth clearly understood. Their theology was not a speculative doctrine, but a positive faith. Their religion was an applied morality, and their morality was a consciousness of God. Their knowledge of God gave them a key to the problems of their times, and they never lost their bearings amid the storms that raged about them. They struggled like spiritual Titans to swing the world into harmony with the plans of God.

It is interesting to note the attitude of the prophets to the ritual worship of Israel. There are two theories of the origin of the Levitical system. One is the traditional theory which I believe. According to that theory, when Moses led Israel out of Egypt, by the direction of God, and under the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, he gave them an elaborate religious ritual. There was a priesthood, and a service

that included altars and ceremonies, and sacrifices, and numberless details of worship. All of these were symbolical and significant of the profound truths of Israel's religion; and the very core of the system was a foreshadowing of the great vicarious sacrifice of the Cross. This ritual, while external, and making little appeal to spiritual thought, was admirably adapted to educate a crude and undeveloped people in the fundamental truths of their religion. The laws that Moses gave to Israel were a part of that system and inextricably interwoven with it. But the same thing happened then that happens now, and that always will happen, the forms of religion became a substitute for religion. The ethical element of the system dropped out, and it became a mere shell, empty of all moral power. Perverted from its original design, instead of being a help, it became a hindrance to spiritual progress, and the prophets denounced it with unsparing severity.

The modern theory is that the Levitical system was invented by the priests after the Jews returned from Babylon, and attached to the name of Moses to give it an air of antiquity. It was subsequent to the prophets and foreign to their spirit. This is not the place to discuss the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch—or "Hexateuch," as the Higher Criticism calls the first six books of the Bible; but several questions rise at the threshold. First, who were these priests, and where did they get the authority to construct such a system? There

is a rational explanation of their origin on the old theory; but on this new theory they are like Melchizedek, "without father or mother"! Second, as Isaiah and Amos lived several centuries before the time when these unknown priests got up their "codes," how could they denounce this system of ritual worship? It is easy to understand how, according to the old theory, the prophets could denounce a formalism which had become a hypocritical substitute for the spiritual reality; but it is impossible to understand how, according to the modern theory of its origin, they could condemn a thing which did not come into existence until they were all in their graves. The Higher Critics must get up something better than that before I can accept it, no matter what academic credentials it brings!

No, this ritual was no late invention of unknown priests. It was as old as Moses, and had been in use for hundreds of years; but it had become a barren formalism, an effete system, a mere hollow shell.

People trusted in it when their hearts were far from God. Nothing could be more offensive to true faith than the hypocrisy it cloaked. The religion of the prophets was a spiritual experience born of a close communion with God. To an Isaiah, an Amos, a Micah, the external office amounted to nothing unless the inner ethical life corresponded with its pretensions; and smoking altars, and bleeding lambs, and mouthing priests, and braying trum-

pets, and clanging cymbals, and swaying censers, were the meaningless ceremonialism that was the veriest mockery of true religion. Isaiah denounced it with scathing severity, and said God hated the whole system of feasts and sacrifices; and turning from this dead formalism, he made his appeal for a religion of practical righteousness: "Cease to do evil; learn to do right." Amos exclaimed with indignant earnestness, blazing with holy wrath, making Amaziah so mad that he ordered him out of the king's chapel and told him to leave the country: "I hate, I despise your feast days. I will not appear in your solemn assemblies. Take away from me the noise of your songs, for I will not listen to the melody of your viols; but let judgment run down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."

And Micah, milder in manner, but no less positive in spirit, asks: "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good. And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" No wonder Amaziah set the police on Amos, for his doctrine cut the grit from under his whole job. One can easily imagine how the priests, robed in the dazzling vestments of their office, performing their spectacular rites, and intoning their mechanical ritual before the altars in Jerusalem, frowned on the daring and sensational

young prophet, Isaiah, as he thundered in the ears of the people Jehovah's repudiation of their mockery of his worship! The priests threw Jeremiah into the dungeon, and tried him for his life. But whether it was the gross and immoral idolatry of Baal, the obscene orgies of Astarte, the cruel rites of Moloch, or the dead formality of Israel that blocked their way, the prophets smote it with the lightning of their wrath and asserted the eternal principles of truth.

Fourth: The Hebrew prophets were men of lofty moral courage. Theirs was no easy task. They faced "a frowning world." The very genius of their religion made compromise impossible. Sometimes they stood, like Elijah, apparently alone, and fought single-handed with the powers of darkness. Sometimes their whole nature shrank from the ordeal, and they would willingly have avoided it, as in the case of Moses, whose stubborn reluctance to accept his task had to be overcome by divine insistence; or Jeremiah, who vowed he would preach no more, but whose resolution melted away under the intense conviction of duty that was like a fire shut up in his bones; or Jonah, who attempted to run away to the end of the world! But they had the courage of their convictions. The martyr spirit flamed in their hearts, and they rose to the crest of every crisis with sublime fearlessness. Braver men never lived than these heroic heralds of the king

of heaven! They knew they were right and that in the end the right would win. They were forward-looking men. The light on their brow was the light of sunrise, not of sunset.

We justly admire the splendid spirit of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, when he brought the haughty Roman emperor to his knees on the threshold of the Church, asserted the lofty authority of his spiritual office, and defied imperial power to swerve him from his post; and the fearless Becket in his unyielding resistance to the imperious English king; and Luther standing by his convictions in the face of the hostile power of Christendom; and Wesley quelling the mob by the majestic calm of his presence. But look at Moses and Aaron going boldly in to Pharaoh, and demanding the release of Israel; and Samuel rebuking the haughty king, Saul; and Elijah hurling in the teeth of Ahab the accusation of his crimes; and Jeremiah sinking up to his armpits in the filth of his dungeon, but sternly uttering the truth that burned in his heart; and Amos denouncing the luxury and injustice of his times, and lashing the "kine of Bashan"—the women of the land—with a scourge of fire!

Let the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tell us how he regarded these ancient heroes of Israel's faith. He is speaking specifically of the prophets: "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the

edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy). They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth." Such is the inspired record of the prophets of Israel.

Fifth: The Hebrew prophets were great orators. A distinguished man, who himself ranks among the highest as an American orator, has edited a collection of books entitled *The World's Famous Orations.* He has gathered together in these volumes the most noted speeches of Greek, Roman, English, Irish and American orators; but he left out the greatest of them all, the Hebrew orators. If oratory is the art of swaying men by public speech, and its merit is determined by its influence on the course of human affairs, then the orators of all other lands must yield in greatness to the prophets of Israel. In the importance of the truth they proclaimed; in their profound knowledge of the basic principles

of all government; in their clear insight into the constitution of human society; in lofty imagination, and that exalted passion that is the soul of all eloquence; above all, in the high moral character and intense personality that give commending sanction to public speech, they are our masters still.

Demosthenes cannot compare with Moses, nor Cicero with Isaiah, either in the greatness of their thought, or the fiery spirit with which they spoke, or the dramatic circumstances under which they delivered their messages, or the far-reaching results of their utterance. Burke must yield to Jeremiah as a political philosopher, and Amos far surpasses either Cobden or Bright as a champion of social justice. Wendell Phillips pleading for the abolition of slavery, and kindling the fires of war with the torch of his zeal, never rose to the high level of Ezekiel, who, though himself a captive, expounded the true principles of political freedom. Webster at his best is far below Paul on Mars Hill, according to his own definition of eloquence as consisting in the man, the subject, and the occasion. Irish eloquence, blazing with fierce invective against British misrule, is inferior to Isaiah's lofty scorn of idolatry, or Elijah's sarcasm hurled at Baal's frenzied priests on Carmel. Listen to the bold, but dignified speech of Peter to the excited thousands in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, or the noble discourse of Stephen before the mob, or Paul at Athens or before Agrippa, and see the very highest type of oratory.

Nor is it wrong to think of Jesus in his character of a public speaker, addressing vast multitudes of people, now in the crowded synagogue, now in the open air, on the hillside or by the seashore, and now in the great court of the temple; astonishing all who heard him by the tone of authority with which he spoke, and so impressing the officers sent to arrest him that they left him unmolested, and gave as their reason for failing to perform the service on which they were sent, "Never man spake as this man"! It is a significant fact, and should be conclusive as to the comparative value of the method, that Jesus committed his message that was to save the world, not to written documents, but to oral speech, and made the tongue of fire, and not the pen, the emblem of its propagation. The truth is safer, and more powerful, lodged in the heart as a living experience out of which the mouth may speak, than it is when enshrined in the cold and lifeless mechanism of literary form.

What an orator Jeremiah must have been. He saw the Jewish state plunging toward the rocks, and struggled at the risk of his life to avert the doom. Day after day, to the excited thousands who crowded the great temple court, in the very teeth of the authorities, and in contradiction of all the pro-Egyptian statesmen, this intrepid man thundered his admonitions in the ears of the multitude; charged the national calamities on the false prophets; denounced all who contradicted his message as liars

and deceivers who were leading the people to their ruin; and declared that the very men who rejected his counsel and mocked his warnings would fulfil his predictions, and be the victims of the judgments he denounced. He resembles Demosthenes breasting in vain the storm of Philip's invasion of Greece. It is a wonderful testimony to the freedom of speech in ancient Israel that Jeremiah was allowed to deliver such "Philippics." But the more they attempted to suppress him, the more outspoken and vehement he became.

What an orator Ezekiel must have been among the exiles in Babylon! He possessed one of the finest attributes of an orator, a splendid voice. People who little heeded his message, delighted to hear him speak, and he, doubtless, always had a crowd. What a voice Webster had, deep, sonorous, far-sounding, matching his massive thought. What a voice O'Connor had, far-flung over listening multitudes, like the boom of the billows of his Irish sea. What a voice Beecher had, trumpet-toned, thrilling with the electric quality of his thought. Beyond them all, what a matchless voice James A. Duncan, of Virginia, had! Melodious as an Eolian harp, loud as the boom of the Virginia surf, soft as a zephyr, terrible as a tempest, modulated to every mood of his mind and distilling into its tones the subtle personality of the speaker! What a modern "dervish" he was; for when Duncan spoke I have seen the least emotional of men, and men skilled in

self-control, "rave" like Saul when he was among the prophets. It was not massive thought, or captivating manner, or brilliant rhetoric, or even impassioned spirit; but something of all of these conveyed to the ear by a voice of surpassing tones. So Ezekiel: "And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but do them not." (Ezek. xxxiii, 32.)

And they were actors as well as speakers. Isaiah went bare-footed and wore the garb of a captive to emphasise his prediction of the fate of Israel if she did not return to God. In the great debate between Jeremiah and Hananiah, Jeremiah came on the rostrum wearing a little yoke around his neck made of limber twigs to symbolise the doom of the nation. One of the most dramatic incidents in the whole history of oratory, is when Jeremiah made his reply to Hananiah, and Hananiah walked up to Jeremiah, and in the face of the vast multitude, snatched the yoke from Jeremiah's neck, saying: "Thus saith the Lord; even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years." Ezekiel seems to have frequently enforced his messages by appropriate dramatic action. Moss-back sticklers for dignity in the pulpit would have called them sensational preachers; and they were!

Much of the Bible is made up of inspired ora-

tory, and in all the annals of eloquence you can find nothing equal to the orations of Moses, or the discourses of Isaiah, the lofty messages of Paul or the wondrous words of Jesus. They sweep the widest ranges of thought, and strike the deepest chords of passion, and have left the greatest impress on the history of man. The court of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem was the arena of a loftier eloquence than was ever heard from the Bema of Athens or the Forum in Rome, in British Parliament or American Senate. And the fame of the orators of Israel is undimmed by the flight of time. The voice of Demosthenes—that matchless voice that thundered o'er "the fierce democratie" of Greece, and shook the throne of Macedon, is silent now, and no longer haunts even academic halls where once it reigned supreme. The eloquence of Cicero, that made the Roman Senate tremble and nations stand in awe, has almost faded from the memory of man, drowned in the roar of time. But the eloquence of the orators of Israel is resounding through the ages like the deep-toned bells of a cathedral, and making music that charms the world. Listen to it, and let it be to you like the sweet Angelus, at whose sound you uncover your head and bow your knee to worship the living God.

Sixth: The Hebrew prophets were all optimists. They all did their work under circumstances of profound discouragement. Think of Moses, when

by vast patience and immense effort, he brought Israel to Kadesh-barnea, on the very borders of the land of promise, he saw all his work apparently fail, narrowly escaped lynching, and saw "the course of time swerve, crook, and turn upon itself" in a "backward sweeping curve" that postponed the fulfilment of his hopes for forty years; and Elijah, who after his great achievement on Mount Carmel, had to fly for his life, and find safety in the solitudes of Horeb; and Isaiah, to whom it was revealed in the very beginning of his ministry that it would not save his people, but harden their hearts and aggravate their doom; and Jeremiah, who saw the city, into whose very walls all the hopes of Israel were built, a desolation and a waste; and Daniel and Ezekiel who were captives in a foreign land! Yet they never wavered in their faith. Amid all the political confusion of their times, the increasing wickedness against which they battled so courageously, the crashing of empires, and the passing of the world-order around them, they exclaimed: "Clouds and darkness are round about him; but righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne"!

They believed and taught that through the spread of the knowledge of Israel's God, evil would be banished from the world, and peace and happiness bless mankind. They could not be true to God and teach any other doctrine; nor can we, for in the

beginning God pronounced the world he had made, not only "good," but "very good," the best of all possible worlds. The prophets lived and did their work in the light of that glorious truth. The world was not a failure to them; or if it was, they looked for a "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." And it was their mission to help Almighty God build that new world.

What a contrast their luminous doctrine presents to the gloomy speculations of many of the intellectual leaders of mankind! There is nothing more tragical in the history of man than to see a great mind like that of a Huxley or Haeckel, or Spencer or Darwin, or Eucken or Bergson, honest seekers after truth, looking out on the universe with keen and penetrative vision, and seeing nothing but the reign of second causes; bringing field after field of nature under the dominion of scientific knowledge; discovering matchless order and harmony and mechanical perfection everywhere from the atom to the planet; extending the boundaries of creation until the boldest imagination sinks oppressed with the conception of its illimitable vastness; and after all unable to find any ultimate end that will explain and justify it all; climbing to the heaven of heavens only to find it an empty void; shouting from the pinnacle of creation into "the Sybil Cave of Destiny," and receiving no answer; following the trail of life, with eager scent, only to find it end in an abyss of nothingness! It is enough to drive an

honest mind to sheer insanity to roam the endless mazes of the universe, hear the shriek of its myriad suffering creatures, feel the throb of its wide anguish, witness the appalling confusion and dense perplexities of human life that exclude all thought of a primal goodness, and fail to find God in it all! To see in all this vast creation, with its beauty and its grandeur and its far-flung expanse of glory from blooming flower to rolling world, nothing but a torture chamber, a charnel house, a

"Vale of death, a hushed Cimerian vale,
Where darkness brooding o'er unfinished fates
With raven wing incumbent, buries all in endless night!"

Let one of the leading infidels of Germany tell us how he regards the universe. It may give us a glimpse into the psychological causes of the World War and put us on our guard against travelling the intellectual road that led Germany to ruin. It exposes the very heart of that "German Kultur," of which we have heard so much, and which is the most diabolical and dangerous heresy that ever cursed mankind. Two generations ago, Frederic Strauss was one of the intellectual leaders of Germany and his doctrines permeated her thought. Strauss said: "The conception of the Cosmos, instead of a personal God, as the finality to which we are led by perception and thought, the ultimate reality beyond which we cannot proceed . . . assumes the more definite shape of matter infinitely

agitated, which by differentiation and integration develops itself to ever higher forms and functions, and describes an everlasting circle, by evolution, dissolution, and then fresh evolution." He abolishes God and puts matter in his place and gives us a meaningless programme for a meaningless universe. He boldly accepted the consequences of this stark materialism, for he said: "In the enormous machine of the universe, amid the incessant whirl and hiss of its jagged iron wheels, amid the deafening crash of its ponderous stamps and hammers, in the midst of this whole terrific commotion, man—a helpless and defenceless creature—finds himself placed, not secure for a moment that on some imprudent motion a wheel may not seize and rend him, or a hammer crush him to powder." That is the outlook of German "Kultur" on the world!

Men with the blunted moral sensibilities of the infidel may contemplate such a universe with composure; but as Carlyle said: "It is clear that to pure moral nature, the loss of religious belief is the loss of everything." Life is not worth living in such a universe, and there is no wonder, to quote Carlyle again, that men who have no faith in God "puke up their sick existence by suicide." So dark and dismal, so meaningless and hopeless, did it all appear to the great English scientist, Huxley, that he said unless something could be done to improve it, collision with a friendly comet that would annihilate it would be a welcome ending to the infinite

farce! Huxley was right. Creation, without redemption, is an infinite failure, and the highest act of a merciful God would be to blot it out of existence. Take Christ out of the world, and it is tragedy from the insect up to man.

But something had been done to improve it, and these Hebrew prophets had caught the beatific vision of redemption! They started to reason about the universe from the basic conception of a personal God, an infinite Mind, as the first cause of all things; the absolute, primal, and unconditioned ground of all being, which is the fundamental and necessary pre-supposition of all rational thought. They, too, climbed to the heaven of heavens, and found it the abode of the living God, and all too small to contain his glory. They, too, stood at the "Sybil Cave of Destiny," and shouted into the primeval silence their question as to the origin, aim, and end of all things; and there came back from its mysterious depths the glorious affirmation of Christian faith, the everlasting postulate of Reason: "In the beginning God"! They, too, followed the trail of life through the labyrinthine maze, and it brought them out upon a mount of vision from which they saw "the new heavens and the new earth," reposing in the peace and bliss of God! What was the source of this optimism? What was it that enabled them to solve the riddle of the moral world that has puzzled the philosophers of all ages? While it was the legitimate inference from the primal doctrine re-

vealed in the beginning that the world is "good," their faith rested on more definite foundations. In their exalted, unique, and divine relation to humanity; in the amplitude and spiritual significance of their office; and in the purport and moral grandeur of the ethical system with which they are forever identified, the Hebrew prophets were the forerunners of Christ. The halo around them was a reflection of the beams from the Sun of Righteousness. They were forward-looking men because they had something to look forward to!

The modern theory of the prophets eliminates the Messianic element from their thought. According to this theory, they were for a long time little better than heathen dervishes; but gradually, by perfectly natural processes of moral improvement, they emerged from this primitive state, and became heroic preachers of righteousness, with social messages for their times. That is all. But the New Testament tells a very different story. According to the New Testament, which some of us are not going to believe, are charming myths about a "lovely peasant," who became "the symbol of the world's highest idealism," the Spirit of Christ was in the Hebrew prophets. They understood it that way, and in moments of rare spiritual exaltation, as they stood on the shining hill-tops of prophecy, they became conscious of the ulterior and supreme significance of their mission and their message, as when David exclaimed: "I will declare the decree:

the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this have I begotten thee"; and Isaiah, when he broke into the rapturous proclamation: "Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this!" Micah caught a glimpse of the meaning of it all, saw behind the scenes, and exclaimed: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me who is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting!"

In short, this world was not a failure to the Hebrew prophets. They could work in the darkness because they believed the day would dawn. They did not reach this rational conception of the world by the intellectual process of human reason and never framed it into a philosophy. It was revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, and was the necessary background and underlying foundation of all their messages. It is this theistic conception of the world, unfolding the inner purpose of God in human history, a conception implicit in the very

dawn of prophecy, that distinguishes the Hebrew prophets from all other religious teachers of mankind and makes it forever impossible to class them at any period of their history with the heathen dervishes. This spiritual knowledge and clear perception of the moral constitution of the world, and the inflexible fidelity with which they proclaimed the truth, clothe these Hebrew orators with unparalleled dignity and power, and lift them into commanding importance in the history of the race of man.

The Hebrew Prophets! Salute them with uncovered head. Illustrious men, they pass before us in the august pageant of history, robed in mantles of light. Venerable teachers, whose wisdom the ages have verified and whose predictions time has fulfilled! Inspired pilots, who steered humanity safely through the seething seas of time toward the port of heaven! Beacon lights of history, whose torches, blazing with celestial truth, led the Church of the living God through the wilderness of heathenism to the broad and glorious day of Christ. Adamantine pillars on whose faith, and veracity, and dauntless courage, Almighty God built his kingdom in the world; and who, with the Apostles, are the foundation on which we stand to-day, "Jesus Christ, Himself, being the chief corner stone."

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